

THE
Parable
OF THE
WEDDING-SUPPER
EXPLAINED.

Tho. Wherein Thomson
The offer of Salvation both
to *Jews* and *Gentiles* is plainly
and pithily applied.

The second Edition.

Whereunto is added a Discourse of
the payment of Tythes, with an Appen-
dix by way of Apology: for the reason-
ablenesse of it;

Very useful for Gospel times.

By *Tho. Larkham* M. A. sometime of
Trinity Colledg in Cambridge.

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1864

To the Saints and people of God in England (members of the same body and partakers of the same spirit) Grace and Peace be multiplied.



Early beloved, about foure years since these ensuing Sermons were made publick, and found good acceptance among many. But to some were offensive in regard of many quick passages, (called by some railing) which were found in them. Yet when they were preached, God was pleased to own them and blesse them for the conversion of many a soul. Of many stones (great and hard hearted sinners I mean) God was pleased to make children to Abraham, by these ensuing Sermons. Yet it cannot be denied, but they also were the occasion of much trouble to the preacher, and of contention and differences in the Town where they were preached. This is indeed an occasional effect of the preaching of the Word. Christ foretold it should be so; for he came not to send peace, but a sword. But the hearts of not a few of Gods people were taken with what was said out of this portion of Scripture, which is the subject of these ensuing Sermons.

To the Reader.

That many others may have benefit by reading them as many already have had, they are here againe made publick. The Author is one very well known in his countrey the County of Devon, where he hath been a Minister about thirty yeares (except the time of his absence or rather exile) In which long time God hath been pleased to blesse his labours to the conversion of many. And that thou (whosoever thou be that readest these lines) may'st the better perceive what he is, I will transcribe a Letter sent to him, and subscribed by many hands of the inhabitants of the place where he lived, when he was away for a time from them, being earnestly desired to carry on the work of God elsewhere.

Reverend Pastour,

We the Church of God at Tavistock being solemnly convoked, after our addresses unto the Almighty, did then in his presence (remembering that former and near relation betwixt your selfe and us, to be that of a Pastour to a flock) acknowledge and declare you to be our right and lawful Pastour set over us by the Lord Jesus Christ the great Shepherd and Bishop of souls: and therefore we cannot part with that interest which we have in you. True it is (that to the grief of our hearts) there was a letter sent you for your resignation, which you might take to be the minde of the Church unanimously: But we declare that this was done rashly by some, unknown to many, and opposed by others that were then present. We humbly desire you that you would take the cause of God in this place into consideration, and speedily come among us: For else we are like not only to be devoured by wolves and bears without, but also one of another. As for what you object about your comfortable being, we know that you have broken through many difficulties: and still God hath given the necks of your enemies to tread upon. The vile persons would quickly give up the Ghost, were you our Captaine here before us. So we supplicate you in the bowels of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you would stand up courageously, and let not the work of God amongst us come to nought. What will

the

To the Reader.

men say? so would we have it. We know you are shortly for London: imploy all your interest both with Parliament and others, that so you may rest in peace with us: and what cost you shall be at for your establishment, we here promise to make good. If we or any of us had that ability to carry on the work, we would not put you to this trouble. Sir, we humbly desire you would weigh the honour of God, our good, your future comfort. Our prayers shall be backing our Petition to your self, and your endeavours for us. The Lord guide your heart and stirre up your zeale for his Name here. Our hearts are full, but we want expressions. We shall wait at the throne of grace with teares for a comfortable answer: in the mean time subscribe our selves your sbeep in the Lord:

This was subscribed by above 60. of the most considerable persons for Religion in the Town & Parish of Tavistock. So here-upon Mr Larkham advising with godly and judicious men both Ministers & others returned to Tavistock: And hath been since upheld by God against all oppositions and molestations, which should they be related, would hardly be believed. If therefore tender-hearted Saints shall at first startle at some expressions in this Treatise, let them know that their ears would tingle and their heart quake to heare & think upon that first neglect of receiving Christ. Secondly, that opposition which neglect drew on. Thirdly, that malice which opposition came unto against the whole race of such as called upon his Name: yea malice brought forth blasphemy in words and persecution in fact: so that it was thought sufficient cause to be oppressed and abused, for being observers of Gods Word and Will. I say let these things be considered, and I believe such will rather fear that some are very near that soul-damning sin mentioned, Heb. 10. 25, 26. and therefore to be saved with fear, and with violence to be plucked out of the fire; then finde fault with any expressions for tartness in these Sermons.

And that the godly and spiritual Reader may yet further see and perceive Gods providences, and the great troubles which both this Aunthor, and the godly party have met with, to be a further

To the Reader.

^a further Apology for the sharp reproofs in this Tract; reade
^b these words following, and I suppose thou wilt be abundantly
satisfied both of the Authour and his way of preaching.

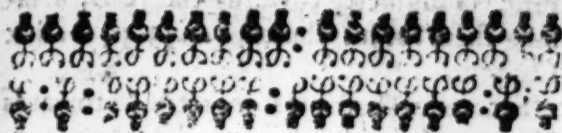
To our Reverend Pastour Mr. Thomas Larkham Minister
of the Gospel in Tavistock.

We the inhabitants of the Town and Parish of Tavistock
whose names are subscribed; having bowed our knees to the Fa-
ther of our Lord Iesus Christ. of whom the whole family in hea-
ven and earth is named; that he would grant us accord-
ing to the riches of his mercy (after so long and sad a
vacancy of the mysteries of salvation, to this poor ignorant place,
wherein are so many hundred souls that know not the right
band from the left in matters of Religion) that our eyes might
once more see such a Teacher as we might take comfort in. And
having our petitions now at last answered in such a way, as we
must needs confess it is the Lords own doing. Now forasmuch as
we understand that of late there hath been a certain paper drawn
up, and sent to the right Honourable — by those whose
minds are darkened through the ignorance that is in them, to
quench the Gospel light among us. and rob us of those comforts
which we now enjoy; Do beseech you in the bowels of Iesus Christ
not to be disheartned, in your labour of love, in this work of the
Lord among us: Professing that we whose hearts have been
often warmed, by those sweet discoveries of the love of God,
which by the assistance of his own Spirit you have held forth un-
to us, do resolve in the strength of Christ to stick close unto
you, in defending you against all injurious practises whatsoever
in the prosecution of your Ministry: desiring you to finish that
building for God which you have begun: that the enemies them-
selves being convinced (if it be the will of God) of the loveliness
therof, may at length come in, and cry, Grace, grace unto it.

Publickly read, & assented unto by about at least two hundred
Persons, and above sixty hands subscribed in the name of all the
rest.

Thus dear brethren (not to be tedious) you have a short ac-
count of the Author & following Treatise, by a poor unprofitable
member of the Church not worthy to be named.

A. B.



The VWedding Supper,

As it was handled out of the fourteen
first verses of the two and twentieth
Chapter of Matthew, in sundry Exercises
in Tavistock in Devon.

The first Sermon.

Matthew 22. Verse 1. 2. 3.

*And Iesus answered and spake unto them again
by Parables, and said, The Kingdom of Hea-
ven is like unto a certain King, which made
a Marriage for his Son, and sent forth his
Servants to call them which were bidden to
to the Wedding; and they would not come.*

IN the latter end of the former
Chap. from the ver. 33. to the
end thereof, Christ under a
Parable of a certain hous-
holder, planting a Vineyard,
and letting it out to Husband-men declares,

B

First,

First, Gods mercy towards the Jews, in taking them for his Church, *ver. 33. 34.* of that Chapter.

Secondly, Their great ingratitude towards him, manifested by their cruell dealing with, and usage of his Servants; beating some, and killing others: And by their most wicked murdering of his own Son: *ver. 35.* unto the 40.

Thirdly, Gods judgements to be inflicted on them for the same, and that by their own acknowledgement, *ver. 40. 41.*

Now in the former part of this 22. *Chap.* our Saviour mentioneth under another Parable, Gods abundant kindness both towards the Jews, and also the Gentiles, in the blessed Means of Grace and Salvation. In which Parable, consider, First, the Preface, Entrance, or Introduction unto the same: Secondly the Parable it self.

The Introduction is in the 1 *verse.* And *Jesus answered and spake unto them again by Parables, saying.* In which words we have, First, the Party propounding the parable. *Jesus.* Secondly, the occasion intimated in the Word, *Answered,* to wit, one speaking touching the blessed condition of such as shall eat bread in the Kingdom of Heaven. *Luke 14. 45.* Lastly the Parties to whom this Parable

Parable was propounded; viz. unto the Auditors present in the Pharisees house, as may be seen out of the forementioned *Luke 14 ver. 7.* of that *chap.* But (to pass over these things) come we to the Parable it self; In which we have to consider,

First, what is spoken of, or represented; to wit, the Kingdom of Heaven.

Secondly, whereby it is represented, of which afterward.

For the Subject matter, viz. The Kingdom of Heaven, we must enquire after the meaning of the words in the first place. Know therefore, that sometime these words, *the Kingdom of Heaven*, signifie *the Kingdom of Glory*; but not so here. Sometimes they are taken for the Kingdom of Grace; and that in diverse respects.

First, the manner of the working of Grace is sometime meant; as *Mat. 13. 31. 32.* in the Parable of the grain of mustardseed and of the leaven.

Secondly, In respect of the season of grace, as *Math 3. 2.* *The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand*; that is, now is the season of Grace, now the door of the Kingdom standeth open.

Thirdly, in respect of the meanes of Grace, the Preaching of the Gospel; So this Phrase,

the Kingdom of Heaven is used *Mat. 13. 47.* where it is compared to a *Nett that was cast into the Sea, and gathered of every kind*; The same phrase is used also, Fourthly, for the visible Church (holding out Christ in preaching and other Ordinances,) in diverse Places and Verses of that thirteenth *Chap.* and also elsewhere. In all these particulars, is this Phrase used by the Holy Ghost. Grace in the heart is like a grain of Mustard seed, which is the least of all Seeds; Yet afterward it comes to be a great Tree; So that in those Eastern places, the birds made Nests in the Branches of them (as the Scripture speaketh.) And we have seen very great Stalkes with Branches in this our own Land in some places. The first seed of Grace, is very little, and sometimes it is long before a gracious Soul can perceive any thing in himself, of this pretious seed, in his own Soul: But at last it makes sign where it is. And for that other resemblance, you know Leaven gives a tang to all the Meal; so doth Grace to the whole man. And for the opportunities of Grace, and the powerfull preaching of the Gospel, they may well be called the Kingdom of Grace. They are the very way to the Kingdom. *Job. 17. 3.* the knowledge of God and Christ is said to be life eternal, because

The Kingdom of Heaven.

9

it is the way unto it. In the same regard *Joh. 12.*
50. his Commandments are called life everlasting; to wit, because the observing of them brings to life everlasting, and they are sure fruits of faith in Christ. So, I say the preaching of the Gospel, is called the Kingdom of Heaven, because it is that by which God hath appointed to bring Souls unto the Kingdom of Heaven.

This being the acceptation of the Phrase (as I take it) in this Parable, I will give you some reasons why it may very fitly so be called.

First, in regard of God the Author, the King of Heaven.

Secondly, In regard of the end of the preaching of the Gospel, *viz.* to prepare and fit people for Heaven, to shew them the way of Salvation. The Diuel himself in the Pythonys acknowledged this truth. *Act. 16. 17.*

Thirdly, In regard of the present condition of such as receive the word. I believe it, they are heirs of the Kingdom, privileged with a guard of Angels. *Heb. 1. 14.* Kings and Kingdoms, are terms of relation. All the Saints are made Kings as well as Priests. *Rev. 1. 6.* The imposition of this high title on Gospel-preaching, gives occasion to note

The preaching of the Gospel

Doct.

That the Preaching of the Gospel, Where it is afforded, is a very great and pretious vouchsafement.

The truth of this Point will the better appear, if we take notice of the glorious titles given to the word preached in Scripture; It is called *a hidden treasure*, Mat. 13. 44. *a Pearl*. verses 45 46. *The word of eternal life*. Joh. 6. 68. *The words of this life*, Acts 5. 20. *The word of Salvation*. Acts 13. 26. *The Salvation of God*, Act. 28. 28. *The power of God unto Salvation*. Rom. 1. 16. *The word of faith*. Rom. 10. 8. *The word of reconciliation*. 2 Cor. 5. 19. *The grace of God that bringeth Salvation*. Titus 2. 11. *The immortal seed of regeneration*. 1 Pet. 1. 23. So that as it is said of the Church, *Psal. 87 ver. 7. 3. Glorious things are spoken of thee thou City of God*; it may also be said of the word of God, *glorious things are spoken of it*.

Reas.

1.

And that not without cause; for,

First, It hath a notable power, to illuminate the understandings of men. Therefore we find that *the people which sate in darkness* (when Christ came among them to preach) *saw a great light*: And to them which sate in the region and shadow of death light was sprung up. Mat. 4. 16. And that Christ (preached) is set to be a *light of the Gentiles, and Salvami-*

unto the ends of the earth, Act. 13. 47.

Secondly, It is of great power to convince the conscience: So we may see 1 Cor. 14. 25. 26. But if all Prophecie, and there come in one that believeth not, or one unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all. And thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest; and so falling down on his face, he will worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth. Therefore Paul saith, (speaking of this word) 2 Cor. 10. 4. 5 6. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God, to the pulling down of strong holds. Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth it self against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. And having in readiness to revenge all disobedience, &c. And so Heb. 4. 12. For the word of God is quick and powerfull, and sharper then any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joynts and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. This iron Mace knocks down the contradictory spirits of men.

2.

3.

Thirdly, This word (called the Kingdom of heaven) works faith and sound conversion. That must be of great worth, which worketh a man into Heaven, and giveth him

Power to prevail with God, and to overcome the world, all which faith doth. But this the word preached doth work, as may be plainly seen, *Rom. 10. 14, 15, 16, 17. It is the power of God unto Salvation. Rom. 1. 16. The engrafted word which is able to save our Soules. Jam. 1. 12. That brings Salvation. Tit. 2. 11. Highly esteemed; bonds and loss of life do not move Paul, if he may fulfill his ministry. Acts 20. ver. 22. to the twenty fifth. The Saints weep and sorrow for the loss of Paul, ver. 37. 38. And both for Preacher and People, Read Acts 21. 13. Then Paul answered, What mean ye to weep and to break my heart? For I am ready, not only to be bound, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus: You see then how Paul prizeth it, and how the Saints prize it, and weep to hear of the binding of that blessed Preacher Paul. Angels scorn not to learn of the Church the Mysteries of the Gospel, *Ephes 3. 10.* they enquire after these things of the word, *1 Peter 1. 12. which things the Angels desire to look into.**

Use.

Now for the use of the point. Seeing Gospel-preaching is such a rich Vouchsafement: Surely then, great is their folly which undervalue the same. And of these there are two sorts.

First,

Great folly to undervalue the Gospel.

9

First, Prophane people, foolish Gaderens, that lose the seasons and opportunities in which God way be found ; in which they might meet with this rich jewell Christ. These were wont to be the only men we had to oppose.

But now we have a Second sort, Such as are deluded, and puzzled by the Devil ; It is sad to consider, that many (once) forward and eminent professors of Religion, do now account it the height of their excellency to slight preaching and preachers. The ground of this exream, is the formalitie of the Calves-men in *Dan* and *Bethel*, against whom zeal burning for lack of watchfulness and wariness, and their unadvisedness of Sathans wiles, hath driven many into these extravagancies in these Ordinance-contemning dayes. We were wont to shoot our arrows against that ungodly generation, who by

First, Their careless comming.

Secondly, Their unreverent behaviour being present.

Thirdly, Loose carriage afterwards: and losing by and by what they have heard *Luke* 8. 12. gave us greatest offence.

But now (alas) fear of being gull'd by black coats hath brought a snare upon many ; endangered by men whose coats are
of

of another colour. But I say to all, *Wisdom crieth without, she uttereth her voice in the streets &c.* Prov. 1. from the twenty fourth to the 33 v: Whiles Christ wooeth, tis good to be wooen. He cries, take me to be your King, Priest, Prophet, and Teacher; O tis a rich Vouchsafement, the Gospel is a precious commoditie; which puts me upon a second Use.

Use. 2. Seeing it is such a blessing, Learn to improve it, ye that do enjoy it.

I.

First, Diligently frequent the places where the word is faithfully preached: Be not so superstitious, or silly, as to think it is nowhere to be had but in a Parish-Church: Nor so absurd, and deluded, as to think it is not there to be had at all. *Can there any good come out of Galilee?* was a question in Christs time; the answer was, *Come and see.* I give you that counsell; Come and see, come and hear: forsake no meeting where ye may meet Christ. The opinion of holiness of places, is now exploded; take heed of the other extrem; Least ye leap out of the frying pan into the fire; or at best get out of Gods Paradise into a warm Sun; What with the mad running after *Jeroboams* calves on the one side, and seeking *Asses* with *Saul*, on the other side: the palseover is neglected, and the
Lion

Preaching is to be honoured.

11

Lion of the Tribe of Judah forsaken.

Secondly, Neither is it enough to frequent places of preaching, but being there, you must hearken attentively.

2.

Thirdly, Ponder it in your hearts.

3.

Fourthly, bring forth fruit in your lives. The commoditie is a rich one, *Paul* thanketh God on the behalf of the *Corinthians* for the Grace of God which was given them by *Iesus Christ*; That in every thing they were enriched by him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge; and that the Testimony of *Christ* was confirmed in them, that they came behind in no gift. 1 Cor. 4. 5, 6, 7. O, it is a rare jewel, it is not for every ones obtaining. For you see your calling brethren, (saith the same Apostle) ver. the twentysixth of the same chap. How that not many wise men after the flesh, not many Mighty, not many Noble are called; Though ye be poor, yet the Gospel is Preached to you; twill make you rich, if ye receive it. Though babes, yet these things revealed to you, will make you men, perfect men in *Christ Iesus*; Though poor in wealth, yet you shall be rich in faith, yea heirs of the Kingdom which God hath promised to them which love him.

4.

Mat. 11. 5.
ver. 25.
Jam. 2. 5.

Lastly, learn to rejoyce in the priviledge of living under a godly ministry. It is a great blessing;

Use. 3.

Mot.

1.

2.

blessing; be moved therefore with its excellency, it is a Pearl, *Math.* 13. 44. And Secondly, The necessity of having it, upon pain of perishing; *If our Gospel be bidden, it is hidden to (yea from) them that are lost.* 2 *Cor.* 4 3. Be joyfull therefore you that have the word. See the Lord stretching out his hand all the day long; And take heed, let it not be to a rebellious and gainsaying People. So much of this Doctrine.

The prædicate, or *cui comparatum*, of that goodly Subject matter or thing spoken of in this Parable, which is the second thing to be considered; and is indeed that by which the Kingdom of Heaven is represented, hath in it three Particulars, two whereof are in this second *verse*: and the third takes up all the other verses unto the fifteenth.

First, we are to take notice of the provider and maker of a marriage Supper. *A certain King* (saith our English translation:) But in the Original, *A man a King, or a man being a King.*

ἀνδρὶ ὡς
βασιλεῖ.

Secondly, who of his house was to be married, for whose sake this great wedding was to be held; *His son.* *The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a man that was a King, that made a marriage for his Son.*

The

The third particular shews us the Guests invited to this supper, to wit. First Jews, unto the eighth verse. Secondly Gentiles, unto the end of the Parable.

But of that particular or any branch of it; I have no purpose to speak at this time, there being not much left of this hour. Therefore of the First, the feast-maker, I am now to speak. And here are two things held out concerning God to be considered.

First, His humbling of himself, under his being likened to a man.

Secondly, His dignity; though he be compared to a man, yet it is to a man that was a King.

God is not a man, but a Spirit; and chal-
lengeth he that dares, or can, to liken him to
to any thing. Isaiah 40. 18. *To whom then
will ye liken God? Or what likeness will ye com-
pare him unto?* And so also. ver. 25. *To whom
then will ye liken me, or shall I be equal, saith
the Holy one?* And in the first of Timothy,
the 6. and 16. vers. *He only hath immortality,
dwelling in the light which no man can ap-
proach unto, whom no man hath seen, nor can
see.* Yet nevertheless it is his pleasure to be
set forth for our capacitie sake by Allusions
to men, Kings and other things; that we
might come to understand somewhat of this
glorious

*Nihil est in
Deo quod
non est
Deus.*

glorious invisible and hidden God. Every thing is most excellent that is in God, in whom all good dwelleth, Infinitely, Eternally, and Essentially ; For there is nothing in God which is not God. I will not trouble you with Schoole-Notions and subtilties : But come to say first of that excellent frame of his in point of Humility or Humbling himself, or condescension.

Doct.

The Doctrine shall be this, *The glorious God of Heaven and Earth is very Humble.* That is, he is that exactly, which the most Humble men are a little according to the measure of the Spirit proportionated out unto them : Or as the man Christ Jesus was, who had the Spirit not by measure, though yet not above measure as he was man. This would be a glorious discovery of God, were it in the hands of one that had skill to manage it.

Reason.

I.

But we must do as we may. In the name of the Lord Jesus therefore know, That as it is the property of a gracious humble Soul, to condescend to men of low Estate. *Rom. 12.16.* So God is said to humble himself, to behold the things that are in Heaven and in the Earth, *Psal. 113.6.* He looketh on his meanest Creatures, *He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifeth the needy out of the dunghill,*

dunghill, ver 7. O what a Glory tis to great men, to take notice of poor distressed mean ones? But consider, God must needs stoop very low to consider the best of his creatures; for all the Nations in comparison of him, are not so much *as the drop of a bucket*, as the Prophet phraseth it.

Reason.

2.

Secondly, consider, what would you say of an eminent man, a man of honour, that having been abused by a poor scullion, whom he is able to crush in a moment, doth yet out of the goodness of his Nature and Humble frame of spirit, Intreat, Beseech, send to first to have a reconciliation? Would not all the World admire such a man? Friends, Thus God deals with sinfull men, *verse 3. 4.* of this *chap.* I am now upon. And 2 *Cor. 5. 18.* we read of Gods reconciling us to himself by Jesus Christ, and of a Ministry of reconciliation. And *ver. 19. 20.* of stooping so low, and honouring man so much as to send Ambassadors, or rather Petitioners to beg, beseech and pray us to be reconciled to him. Stand amazed O ye proud worms, that have such proud implacable Stomacks, that swell with venome like Toades, and are better like mischievous Divels, then like men; So far are ye from being like Christian men. O the wrath of pride as *Salomon* calls it, He sell

sell my Plow; Ile do so and so, though it cost me mine Estate; Ile not leave him worth a groat, base Fellow, Clown, Mechanick, Priest, Ile make him know that I am not his Companion: (Yea but thou art, and shalt be the fellow creature of the meanest, maugre thy pride) Doth God do so? or Dost thou think there is less difference between God and thy self, then between thy self and the meanest man alive? This is the second reason as I call it.

Reason.

3.

Thirdly, We may argue or demonstrate the Humility of the Lord, from the places of his dwelling, or frame of spirit that he takes most delight in, *Isaiah 57.15. For thus saith the high and lofty one that inhabiteth Eternity, whose name is holy; I dwell in the high and Holy place: With him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the Humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.* Unto babes doth God reveal himself, *Mat. 11.25.* To the poor separated ones of the world will he be a father, and they shall be his Sons and Daughters, though he be the Lord Almighty. *2 Cor. 6. 18.* I tell you, if God were to walk abroad in the shape of a man, he would sooner visite a poor humble gracious soul a thousand times then the Alantara fellows, mincing Minions, or scraping

ing Muck-worms of the Earth, notwithstanding their Wealth, Beauty or Gallantry. *He putteth down the mighty from their seats, and exalteth them of low degree, Luk. 52.*

Fourthly, His humility is magnified, and made apparent by his great and patient waiting to be gracious. What man of fashion would wait upon beggars heels to do them good, to fill their hungry bellies, and to cloth their naked backs? Behold (saith the faithful witness) *I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.* He waits, even when his head is filled with dew, and his locks with the drops of the night. *Cant. 5. 2.* He endures with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction. *Rom. 6. 22.* He is long suffering to us ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. These are glorious beams of that one Glory and excellency, able to dazzle our eyes utterly; whiles men are doing him all the mischief they can, he is then waiting and striving to be gracious. A Plaister was made for those Convert's *Acts the 2.* of that very blood which they wickedly shed.

Then why should his Creatures be proud, seeing the Creator is so Humble? Yet such we
C read

Reason.
4.

Use. 1.

read of Psal. 12. 4. who have said *with our tongue will we prevail, our lipps are our own; Who is Lord over us?* Malacy complains cap. 3. 15. That the proud were called happy. This is the cause of contention among People. Prov. 13. 10. *Only by Pride cometh Contention, but with the well-advised is wisdom.* O that men would marke such threatening Scriptures as I shall mention against Proud men. Lev. 16. 19. *I will break the pride of your Power.* Prov. 15. 25. *The Lord will destroy the house of the Proud,* Prov. 16. 18. *Pride goeth before destruction: and a haughty spirit before a fall.* Luk. 151. *He hath shewed strength with his arm, he hath scattered the proud.* &c. James 4. 6. *God resisteth the proud, but he giveth Grace to the Humble:* Pride is either in regard of God or men; but I must not meddle now with those particulars.

Use. 2.

A second use therefore is to comfort those that are Humble; They are like God; God will not despise such as be like himself. *He will teach them,* Psal. 25. 9. *He will honour them,* Psal. 113. 7, 8. *He raiseth up the poor out of the dust: and lifteth the needy out of the dunghill, that he may set him with Princes, even with the Princes of his People.* He will dwell with them as *Isaiah 57. 15.* mentioned before. Humility is the

the fore-runner of honour, as a haughty heart is of destruction, *Prov. 18. 12.* Let the Sons of men be in love with this Grace; Who would not be like God? This Grace of Humility is a most excellent Grace. Knowledge, Wealth, Honour, zeal: neither of them is comparable to it.

Use.

3.

Motive

1.

Yet further think upon the necessity of having it; the want of it is a fore runner of destruction, in the forenamed *Prov. 18. 12.* No entering into the Kingdom of Heaven without, *Mark. 10. 15.*

2.

Thirdly, Consider the sins we have committed: the judgements we have thereby deserved. For the first, what good have we done in our places with our wealth? how unprofitably have we spent our time? And then consider, wrath is abroad the world. This is not a time, sure, for men to be proud.

3.

The 2.

branch.

Doctr.

But I proceed to the second thing held out concerning God, viz. his dignity. Though he will be likened to a man: yet it shall be to a man that is a King. Surely, Gods humility ought not to cause disrespect of his dignity. Kings are to be honoured *1 Pet. 2. 13.* The King is Supream, and therefore to be submitted unto, & to be honoured *v. 17.* And if Earthly Kings; how much more the King of Heaven, the King of Glory? God is the

C 2

King

The dignity of God.

King of Glory. *Psalm 24. ver. 7. 8, 9. and 10.* In every one of those four ver. he is called the King of Glory. *Lift up your heads O ye Gates, and be ye lift up ye everlasting doors, that the King of Glory may come in. Who is this King of Glory? the Lord strong and Mighty, the Lord Mighty in Battel. Lift up your heads O ye Gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of Glory shall come in. And twice in the last verse, Who is this King of Glory? The Lord of Hosts, he is the King of Glory. Selah.* He is a King that remains for ever: whereas other Kings die and leave their Kingdoms to others. *Psalm 29. 10.* the latter part of the verse. *Yea the Lord sitteth King for ever. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his Kingdom is from Generation to Generation. Deuteronom. cap. 4. ver. 34.*

Reason.

Although God be Humble, yet he must not be despised, for this Reason: Because Humility in great Ones call's for the more respect. We have a saying of a proud heart and a Beggars purse, when we will set out an absurd Als; Surely, even To, To say a Mighty man, and an Humble Soul, is to give a notable Character of one worthy to be had in Honour. The Humble carriage

carriage of *Abraham* a man of Might
 (he had in his house thirty eight * Trained ^{P. sse & nollenobile.} Souldiers) got him a great deal of respect * ^{Gen. 14.}
 among the children of *Heth*. You may ^{14.}
 read the story at large your selves, *Gen.*
twenty three, ver. six unto the thirteenth.
He stood up, he bowed himself to the people of
the Land, even to the children of Heth. ver.
7. And again Abraham bowed down him-
self before the People of the Land. So, I
 say Gods humbling of himself, should
 rather be a cause why People should
 give him the greater Honour and Reve-
 rence.

But I must draw to an end; I therefore
 shall speak a word by way of Use and Ap-
 plication, and so end this first particular,
 (to wit the feast-maker) and also this
 Sermon.

The first Use shall be to reprove sharply ^{Use. I.}
 that Indian-like frame of Spirit so com-
 mon among men. Those poor Infidels
 stand in great awe of their (*Hoggery*)
 God (as they call him) *Abamaccho*, be-
 cause he doth them much mischief. But
 their good God, *Tanto*, they care not
 how they use. Surely they are much to
 blame, that abuse the riches of his goodness,
 and forbearance, and long-suffering, not
 knowing

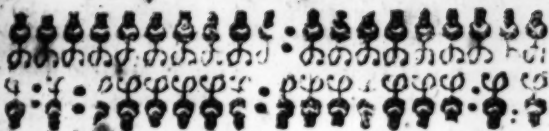
The dignity of God.

knowing that the goodness of God leadeth them to repentance. Romans 2. 4. O despise not the Humble and plain wayes of the Lord; undervalue not his Gospel because the poor receive it. Matthew 11. 5, and the rich blaspheme that worthy way, 74. 2. 7. If you do provoke him, and grieve him and slight him, he will make a way for his Anger, Psal. 78. 40. 41. 50. He will be terrible; the heathen shall perish out his land. Psal. 10. 16. The Lord reigneth, let the People tremble. Psal. 99. 1. He is a great King, and his name is dreadfull among the Heathen. Malachy 1. 14. They that abuse Gods kindness, shall not gain by it. They that scoff at his patience, as 2 Per. 3. 3. &c. or at the meanness of his worshippers, Joh. 7. 48 49. and the like, shall find that blue-apron Mechanicks shall be too hard at last for Scarlet-coats, and bring down the mighty from their throne.

Use. 2.

Be of good cheer ye that honour God, God will honour you. 1 Sam. 2. 30. Though God would walk low and seem to be not worth the looking after: yet he will come at last to be glorified, and admired by them that have beleeyed his testimony, and have worshipped him even in a stable, and have kept the (despised) faith. But here shall be an end.

The



The Second Sermon.

Mathew 22. 2.

*The Kingdom of Heaven is like
unto a King that made a Marriage
for his Son.*

WE have finished in this place
of meeting (besides divers
other things dispatched the
last time) the first of those three
Particulars noted in the pre-
dicate of this parabolical Proposition: *viz.*
the feast maker; we have heard of that two-
fold representation of him; as a man to
shew his condescension, and humbling of
himself for our good: And yet a man that
was a King; to set forth his dignity, and
greatness over all.

C 4

Now

The second particular.

Now the next thing we have to do, is to speak of the Honourable person that gives occasion for this feast. And that is Christ who is to be married; whose Spouse is the Holy Church.

In this particular there are divers things of great weight to be taken notice of.

First, The Author and fountain of saving grace, viz. God, called here *A King, making a Marriage for his Son.*

Secondly, Here is implied the neer union that is betwixt Christ and the Elect. It is agreed, that there shall be a marriage concluded upon (according to God the Fathers everlasting purpose) between them and his son Jesus. *The Kingdom of heaven is like unto a King that made a Marriage for his Son.*

Thirdly, we shall also out of these words speak of the way and Means, whereby this Grace from God in the supper of the Lamb is conveyed, & made out to the Elect: to wit, the powerfull preaching of the Gospel. This lies wrapped up in these words, *the Kingdom of Heaven*, whereby is meant (as I told you in the beginning) the word of the Kingdom. The plain Truth is, and the Summary Sense, The preaching of Christ, and the offering of him in the Ministry of the Gospel is the way
the

the Lord hath ordained, to work faith by, whereby we are united unto Christ, and justified.

I will begin with the first, and so proceed to the handling of the rest at this time, as in the presence of the Lord.

The first Doctrine shall be this, *That* Doct.
grace here, and glory hereafter, are the free From the
gift of God. first. It is his pleasure that his Son be Married, and such a Wedding Supper held as may shew forth the riches of his Grace, (according to the capacity of man) somewhat answerable to the bounty of a God. You see the Subject matter is Grace, which we must warily speak of ; that we may shun the *Charybdis* of Popish merit, and yet not fall upon, or into the *Scylla* of Lawless Antinomianisme. Most certain it is that Salvation is of Grace, and not of works : as that learned Dr. of the Church, the Apostle *Paul* disputes it, and demonstrates it, both in his Epistle to the *Romans*, and also in his Epistle to the *Galatians*. And although there are many uses of the Holy Moral Law, (which I purpose not now to meddle with) yet must it stand aside, as weak and insufficient through the flesh ; and give place unto Gods sending his Son into the world, *that whosoever believeth in him, and accepteth of Gods offer of*
Grace,

Grace and Glory are Gods gifts.

Grace, should not perish, but have life everlasting. This Grace of God is by much the Elder brother, if we look no higher then Abraham. Gal. 3. 17. And this I say, (saith Paul) that the Law which was 430. years after, cannot disannull the Covenant that was before of God in respect of Christ that it should make the Promise of none effect. All is of Grace.

First, Election is of Grace Rom. 11. 5. There is a remnant according to the election of Grace. Ephes. 1. 5, 6. Having predestinated us, &c according to the good pleasure of his Will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. See Chap. 2. to the tenth. And in many other places.

Secondly, all the Coordinated Mediums, all that God works by, all are free and of Grace.

As first, Christ is given, Romans 8. 32. Who spared not his own Son, but gave him for us all to Death.

Secondly, The word bringing salvation is free, and is therefore called the Grace of God. (Titus 2, 11.) bringing Salvation.

Thirdly, Repentance is of Gods giving also. Acts 11. 18.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, Likewise Faith, that mother-Grace, is the gift of God. *Phil.* 1. 29. And generally the whole Law of the Spirit of life, as it is called *Rom.* 8. 2. is of Gods gracious working, as is testified *Ephes.* 2. 1. And you hath he quickned which were dead in trespasses and finnes.

We may reason from the very name Grace, *Reas.* 1. it signifies that which is imparted *gratis*, that is freely. So the Holy Ghost often reasons in these words, (or else Grace were no Grace.) And Grace and Merit do stand extremly in opposition one to another.

Secondly, We may reason from universality, from the General to Particular. *Of him and through him* (as well as for him) *are all things.* Every good and perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the father of lights, &c. *James* 1. 17. All common Graces, are of his Grace and free gift: much more saving grace, which is a more special effect of his love and favor.

But I come to the Uses (having two other Doctrines to dispatch at this time.) And first here falls to the ground the Doctrine of merit, so mightily and subtilly among our latter Popish School-men contended for. What should I read Lectures of Polemical Divinity in

*Dona sua
coronat
Deus, non
meritua.
Aug.*

in this popular auditory? They have a blind distinction of merit of congruity and condignity; one place of *Luke* will serve for all. *Cap. 17. 10.* So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all that is commanded you, say, *We are unprofitable Servants.* There is neither merit of congruity before justification, nor merit of condignity after. *But by Grace are we saved through faith, and that not of our selves, it is the gift of God.* *Ephes. 2. 8.* not our Merits, but Gods gifts are with his mercifull and bountifull vouchsafements, crowned here and hereafter.

Use. 2.

Secondly, comfort ye, comfort ye your selves with these words, O all ye desirers of saving Grace. *They that hunger and thirst, &c.* are pronounced blessed. *Mat. 5. 6.* What though ye see nothing in your selves but that which loads you? even such are invited to come. *Mat. 11. 28.* If God send to invite, surely he will not reject those that desire him, though they be never so sinfull.

*Gratia si-
tiens, sitia-
ta.*

But we must take heed, First, of being contented with a few weak and faint desires. If thy desires come from a right principle, they are as truly Grace as faith it self. There is Grace desiring, as well as Grace desired.

Secondly,

Secondly, take heed of regarding wickedness in your hearts, *Psal. 66. 18.* or else the Lord will not regard your desire. And no marvail, These desires so accompanied, shew themselves not to proceed from that preventing Grace which all successfull desires do proceed from.

I have yet one use more. Grace here and Glory hereafter are of the free gift and Grace of God. Ye see where to go for both the one and the other. God is the Author and Fountain of all Grace, seek it of him.

Use. 3.

And to move you, consider first the Excellency of that condition ye shall be in Christ; to partake of his goodly Image and Grace, to be transformed into his Image from Glory to Glory. *Mot. 1.*

Secondly, It is of absolute necessity, that ye come to this supper. I say, He that refuseth, and cometh not, shall be damned, though he were a man of wax in the eyes of the World. *2.*

Thirdly, Methinks we might say something of the blessed and Gracious opportunities God hath given unto you to move you to ply God day and night, and to cry, Christ Christ; Bread bread, for the Lords sake bread. *3.*

But

Object.

But I said but now, Prayers must proceed from the spirit, and that is that I need make is plain, will some say.

Sol.

Brethren, our work is to bid you ask, Gods work is to enable you to ask. The work of Christs mouth to *Lazarus*, was to bid him to come forth of the Grave. It was the secret work of his Almighty Power to make him alive, that he might hear and obey that command.

Quest.

How should a man seek Grace at Gods hands aright?

Answ.

I answer. He must be willing to take all that God hath promised to give to them that ask, upon Gods own terms and conditions, and limitations too, in regard of desired temporal blessings. Ye that say ye believe, ye must repent, &c. *Acts 2. 38.* Nay ye shall. *Rom. 6. 1, 2, 3.* *What shall we say then? shall we continue in sin that Grace may abound? God forbid; how shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death. And so for outward things, we are taught by Christs example in his Agony, to say, not my will, but thy will be done. In a word to take pleasure in the lovely wayes of holiness, and to referr our selves to Gods Love, Care, Wisdom,*

dom, Power, Truth and Faithfulness for outward things. But the main thing in hand is to stir you up, to keep begging of this Grace, that is of the discovery of Gods love to thy poor Soul, and that God would lift up upon thee the light of his Countenance. So much of the first particular.

We come to the second; to wit, to shew you what is meant by the Marriage of the Kings Son. Even no other thing, no less privilege; then a most neer Union between Christ and the Elect. For even as a man and a woman by the bond of Marriage become one, Gen. 2. 24. *Therefore shall a man leave his Father, and his Mother, and shall cleave unto his Wife: and they twain shall be one flesh;* and so Mat. 19. 4, 5, 6. it is confirmed by Christ, and said to be a Union and a joyning together by God: So is it between Christ and his Church. Ephes. 5. ver. 23. and 31. And therefore it is said in my text, *The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a man, that was a King that made a Marriage for his Son.* Where first, God is signified with his free Grace (as before.) And secondly, This thing that I have now in hand, viz. That it was his pleasure, that his Son, so fitted to be a husband to lost mankind, by his incarnation (as it is said, *A body hast thou given me*) and by his Death
and

and Passion, and glorious Resurrection, and Ascension should be offered to all the world of the Jews and Gentiles; and that there should be a General invitation to the end, that as many as come, should be not only Guests, but the very Spouse, and be married to Christ, and assured thereof, by the spirit of faith and sanctification. So That the Doctrine shall be,

Doct.

That there is a Marriage made, and agreed upon, for the Son of God by God the King of Kings with every gracious Soul. Tis ended (as we use to say) between them. This is that which is here called the Kingdom of Heaven, the work of Grace; and it is therefore compared to a Marriage, because there is such a neer union between all the Children of the Kingdom and Christ, as there is between the Husband and the Wife.

I will, (for your better profiting by this so admirable point) go upon some Particulars; some Analogies and Resemblances, between Marriages among men, and this work of Union and Conjunction with Christ.

1. And first you know, men use to go a wooing, (as we call it) they do either by themselves or their spokesmen make motions of Marriage, and declare their love, to the young women,

women, they are willing to make their wives. And this (you know) is first before there is an actual possessing and uniting : Even so we read 2 Cor. 5.20. *Now then we are Ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us ; we pray you in Christs stead, that ye be reconciled to God.* Now when Christ was in the flesh, he went a woing himself in his own person. John 3.19. *Light is come into the world ; and men love darknes,* &c. But ver. 29. of that chap. he hath a spokesman, he goes a woing by his friend : *He that hath the Bride is the Bridegroom, (as you shall find there :) but the friend of the Bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the Bridegrooms voice.* That spokesman there meant, was *John Baptist.* And the Bridegroom there meant, is Christ now incarnate, though the son of God from everlasting ; He was afterward crucified, dead, and buried, and rose again the third day, this is the Husband of the Church, this is the yong man that is to be married (as we use to say.) Cursed be they that destroy the History, under a pretence of embracing the Mystry, (as some absurd men have in my hearing, whom I therefore questioned, but it was not in a time successful.) But I say this, Christ went a woing
D O himself

himself, but now by his messengers he doth it in Gospel-Preaching.

2.
Valo ani-
marum est
essentia
matrimo-
nii.

Secondly, There is a mutual consent after the time of woing. This is called a receiving
1 John 12. *But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name. And indeed this is the very union, and essence of the Marriage. For such are regenerated, as it followeth ver. 13. Which are born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. Tis a match. My beloved is mine, and I am his, saith the Spouse. Canticles 2. 16.*

3.

Thirdly, There is an enjoying each other in the Married condition. Can. 1. ver. 2. 3. 4. *Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth: for thy love is better then Wine. Because of the savour of thy good Ointment, thy name is as Ointment poured forth, therefore the Virgins love thee. Draw me, we will run after thee, the King hath brought me into his chambers: We will be glad and rejoyce in thee, we will remember thy love more then Wine; the upright love thee: O, who can imagine what this secret enjoying of Christ is, that hath not felt it? There is a kind of spiritual copulation, between Christ and every true believer; Yea also between Christ and Congregations, which*

which are so many Mothers to bring forth.

And this puts me upon a fourth likeness. Wives blessed of God, are like fruitfull Vines upon the Walls of the house, whose children stand like Olive plants round about the Table. Psal. 128. 3. Such as are married in the fear of God, have a promise of this blessing.

4.

This is made good; First in each Saints growth in Grace, *Isaiah 61. 10. I will greatly rejoyce in the Lord, my Soul shall be joyfull in my God: For he hath clothed me with the garment of Salvation, he hath covered me with the Robe of Righteousness, as a Bridegroom decketh himself with Ornaments, and as a Bride adorneth herself with Jewels.* The Saints are led forward towards perfection *Heb 6. 1.* O many a sweet Babe doth a gracious Soul bear and Nurse to the Glory of God. But wicked men bring forth ugly bratts of Malice, Pride, Uncleanneſſe, they are in conjunction with the Divil; their Fruite and Wine is of *Sodom*, not of *Jerusalem*.

And then Secondly, In the Churches increase it is also verified. *Isaiah 61. 4, 5, 6. And they shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall*

D 2

repair

repair the wast Cities, the desolations of many Generations, &c. The Summe is, the Church is a fruitfull Mother: *Jerusalem the Mother of us all*, in conjunction with Christ, brings forth many Sons. The Sons of the Church come from far, and her Daughters are Nursed at her side. *Isaiah 60. 4.* This comes to pass by Christs Husband-ship; the Church seemingly barren, and a Widdow, brings forth many Children to Christ.

5. Fifthly, There is a transacting of conditions. The riches of the Husband becoms the Riches of the Wife; and the debts of the Wife becomē the debts of the Husband. *2 Cor. 5. the last.* *For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the Righteousness of God in him.*

6. Sixthly, There is a Sympathising between Christ and his Church. *Acts 9. 4.* *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?* So Christ calls out of Heaven. And again *Mat. 25. 40.* *In as much as ye did it to the least of these my brethren, ye did it unto me.* And the Church again is very sensible of Gods dishonors. And it grieveth David to see the transgressors, *because men keep not Gods Law*, *Psalm 119. 136.*

7. But Seventhly, Between such as are knit in

in the Marriage knot, there is a great working in affection; great joy in the presence one of another; grief in the absence one from another: even so, if God do hide his face from *David*, he is troubled, *Psal.* 30. 7. And his heart longs to be in the Temple, where God was wont to shew his beauty, and come with embraces to him and others of his People.

Now singular use may be made of this Soul ravishing Doctrine; but I shall confine my self to 3. One of information, another of consolation, and the last of exhortation, and in all shall be brief, because I have one point more to dispatch, and the time runneth on apace.

Use. I.

I say, First, We may be informed of the great worth of Gospel Ordinances, under which there is such a nearness held forth, yea such a conjunction with Christ enjoyed. Here are kisses and embraces to be had. Meetings for the enjoyment of them, are Christs bed of Love. For there (to wit in the use of Church Ordinances) the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore, *Psal.* 133. 3. and again. *By night on my bed I sought him whom my Soul loveth.* Cant. 3. 1. That is in the Communion of Saints and enjoyment of Ordinances. They

are not much acquainted with Christ, (it is to be doubted) that cry down, what he is wont to make himself out by to his Saints.

Use. 2.

But Secondly, Gracious souls should take comfort and rejoyce in their match, and well they may. It is not an ordinary one, it is no small thing to be Married to the Son of God. We have great and many particular things to take comfort in, but I will be brief.

First. He looks for nothing to draw his Love; therefore our want of beauty cannot dissolve the knot.

Secondly, No infirmity in us, can draw away his Love from us, for his Love is immutably firm, because it is Eternal and Free.

Thirdly, Nothing can hinder our conversing with him; we have a priviledge to carry about Christ with us.

All the powers in Earth and Hell cannot make a separation between Christ and a Christian, no not for one minute.

Object. What. cannot Sin ? doth not the Scripture say, Thy sins have separated between thee and thy God, &c.

I answer. God is the same in his suspensions which are his Physick, that he is in his Ordinances

distances of feeding, and in all prosperous Vouchsafements. And so (by the way) ought the Church and every Christian to be in their Reproofs, Checks, Admonitions; of the same frame of spirit, aiming at the good of the party dealt withall, as in their most pleasing dealings: *Let all your things be done in Charity.* I say, (to return to this branch of the comfort) All the world cannot separate you, nor hinder you from enjoying Christ, no not a minute; sin may be an occasion of a hiding of his face. But God would not let his people sin if it were not for their good; *For all things must work together for their good Rom. 8. 28.* This is a mighty priviledge the Saints have.

Fourthly, He will enable you to do what he commands you. The Saints have not only habitual Grace, to wit, the new Creature: But also, the Lord is bound by promise to be with them, to direct them, to help them, and assist them, with continual supplies of Grace; for they are taught to wait upon him, and to seek unto him, & to be much in trading with God, and all his Factors, and therefore must needs be better able to do his will. You shall find Psal. 25. 12. *What man is he that feareth the Lord? Him*

D 4

Will

will he teach the way that he shall choofe. The greatest hindrance of Gods service, and of doing his will, is fear. Now God being Lord of the affections, can quickly take away fear or give trembling; but he is bound by promise, *as to Withhold no good thing*; so to withdraw every evil thing, (as all that hinders obedience is evil) from his servants.

Lastly, the Love of God which is by reason of this Union, is above all Love, it shall transcend all Love. The happiest Wife in the World may possibly expect or desire too much from her Husband, though the best Husband in the World. We cannot be too bold with God in expecting or desiring, unless it be in sinfull desires. I say, We cannot expect too much from God; We can never build too much upon his Love; it is transcendent.

Use. 3. I come now to the last Use. I told you first, I would make three, of which two are finished. The third is a use of exhortation. You see a Son offered by God to be Married to you; You see that no less Priviledge is to believers in Christ vouchsafed, then to be Married to him: as he saith Hosea. 2 19. *And I will betroth thee unto me for ever, &c.* Therefore come away, marry this Kings son, forsake

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for sake not your mercy, do not overstand your Market: You will never have such an offer again, (I mean not, of another opportunity; for what am I to limit the Holy one of Israel?) But of another happiness; for in this seed of *Abraham* alone blessedness is to be had; I say you cannot possibly speed your selves better. There is none so lovely, none so able to make you every-way happy, none so willing to do every body good. These expressions of ours are to your capacity; These glorious beams of Christ shine brightly, the Lord open your eyes to see them; seek by Prayer, wait upon Ordinances, argue upon promises; And the Lord strike hands with you in much mercy. *Amen, Amen.*

It remaineth that something be spoken of the means Ordained by the Lord to attain this assurance of Union with Christ; to wit, the Preaching of the Gospel, signified by these words, (*The Kingdom of Heaven*) for by it is saving Grace conveyed. Gospel preaching is Ordained and appointed of the Lord to that end, that men may hear of Christ, believe in Christ, be saved by Christ, and be glorified with Christ. So in that the Kingdom of Heaven, that is, the Gospel Preached, is compared to a Marriage-making,

By the Preaching of the Gospel

makeing, I observe this last Doctrine ;

The end of the Preaching of the Gospel is to prepare People for a Marriage with Christ the Son of God.

Reason.

And the Reason is, because it is that very instant of Grace, which God, who hath appointed a time for every action, hath appointed for his Elect to come and joyn hands with Christ in the Act of believing. It is the means of faith. Rom. 10. 17. *So then faith is by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.* The Lord hath appointed that the Gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached over all the World for a witness unto all Nations ; That the Elect in every place may be brought in (according to Gods eternal purpose of Love) to communion with the Church, and Union unto Christ.

Use. 1.

We may hereupon conclude, in the first place, the necessity of the Preaching of the Gospel, contrary to their vain conceit that think it needless ; they see not the end of it, to wit a Marriage with Christ. Or if they do, yet they mean not to be divorced from their wicked Lults, unto which they are already Wedded.

But yet lodge this truth among the Oracles of God, That Gospel Preaching is necessary. And that it is the ordinary
and

and usual means to obtain Faith.

O Therefore, what a happiness do those people enjoy, if they had eyes to see it, that have the Gospel faithfully preached unto them, to prepare them for a Marriage with Christ. *Use. 2.* And how shall they escape which neglect so great salvation? Which to do is a greater sin then to break the whole Law. The punishment shews the greatness of the sin; a double curse is pronounced against them that love not the Lord Jesus, 1 Cor. 16. 22. that is against those that neglect Gospel offers, and Ordinances, in which Christ goeth a wooing to the children of men. If any one therefore here present, be an Enemy to the dispensations of the Gospel, or a neglecter of this gracious offer of Christ therein: let him look upon himself as on an execrable thing which God hates, and let him see God even stretching out his power to confound him, and the Gospel cursing him. *Use. 3.*

Be exhorted therefore to improve this appointed employment; This concerns both Preacher and Hearers. *Use. 4.*

Motive. It is the best preferment a man can come unto, to be United and Married to Christ; And therefore no small preferment to be employed in this high work of bringing *Motive*

By the Preaching of the Gospel

bringing People to Salvation. And to move other People, let this be weighed well, that to lose all things in the world to gain Christ, is the best bargain that ever man made. Phil. 3. 7. 8. *But what things were gain to me, these I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things: and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ.*

Quest. But how shall Ministers improve this benefit?

Ans. I answer, by Preaching Christ unto the People, Plainly, Powerfully, in the evidence of Gods Spirit, *not in the enticing words of mans wisdom, 1 Cor. chap. 2. ver. 1. &c.*

Object. But if a man do not Preach eloquently, he shall lose his repute and the Grace of his pains.

Sol. I answer. No: for although some that know not God will be prating; yet he is the best schollar that edifies most. *1 Cor. 14. v. 12. 18. 19. 21. 22.* To excell to the edifying of the Church, to speak five words with understanding that others may be taught to Prophetic, so as men may believe, *acc* special Phrases in those verses. A man that speaks

speaks pithily to the conscience, will shew himself a scholler (besides his purpose) to all judicious hearers. Such men shew themselves to have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, not handling the word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth, commending themselves to every mans conscience in the sight of God. 2 Cor. 4. 2. And yet further ver. 5. For we Preach not our selves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and our selves your servants for Jesus sake. And then note, I said not only plainly, but powerfully; We should have such a spirit as Paul, who out of the abundance of his Zeal was stirred in spirit. Acts 17. 16. And so Philip. 3. 18. He told them *WEEPING* of their faults, that were Enemies to the Cross of Christ. This proceeded out of the abundance of his Love to Christ and mankind. And this was a sign of Lots sincerity, that his righteous soul was grieved and vexed, &c. 2 Pet. 2. 7. And to hate the work of the Nicolaitans which God hateth, is very commendable. Rev. 2. 15. To hate them that hate God. Psal. 139. 21. and to be grieved with those that rise up against him.

Now for Hearers.

They must improve this benefit and blessing of Gospel-Preaching; By striving and labouring

3.
Hearers.

labouring hereby, to be prepared for a Marriage with Christ. *By putting off the old man, and putting on the new man.* Ephes. 4. ver. 16. to the 25. People must forget their own People and their Fathers house, and labour to be clothed with clothing of wrought Gold. *Psal. 45. ver. 10. 13.* Labour to get Oyle in your Vessels, as well as in your Lamps. *Mat. 25. 4.* That ye may enter in with him to the Marriage, when the door shall be shut against such as have neglected these opportunities *ver. 10.* You must labour to make your selves ready for the Marriage of the Lamb, to put on Christ, who is the clean and white and fine Linnen of the Saints. *Rev. 19. 7. 8.* *O that you would know now, even now, in this your day, the things that do belong to your peace.* And especially to be often hammering on this, that this rich vouchsafement will have its Errands end one way or th' other. It is like strong Physick, if it do not work, twill kill. If the word *be not the savour of life unto life, it will be the savour of death unto death.*

Thus have I finished the second *verse* wholly. Out of which I have spoken of the Subject matter of this Parable, the Kingdom of Heaven, and of two Branches of the predicate, *viz.* the Marriage-maker,

maker, and the Bridegroom; and in the latter, of all three particulars. *viz.* the fountain of Grace, the Union between Christ and his Church, and the way and means whereby this is wrought.

The third, *viz.* the Guests, is next to be handled: So much for this time.

The

The Third Sermon.

Matthew 22. 3.

*And send forth his Ser-vants to call
them that were bidden to the
Wedding; And they would
not come.*

The third
particular
in the præ-
dicare.



His verse begins the point
of the Guests that are gra-
tiously invited by the Lord
to come to Christ. Both
Jews, and *Gentiles*. The
double Call of the *Jews*,
Gods old acquaintaince, is

vers. 3. to the 8.

And then the Call of the *Gentiles*, upon
their

their refusal, unto the end of the Parable.

We are now to make enterance, and to speak of the first invitation of the *Jews*, Gods old customers, as it is set down in this *verse* now read unto you. In which we have two parts.

First Gods favour in giving them the first offer of this Grace, in these words, *And sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the Wedding.*

Secondly, Their ingratitude, shewed in their willfull refusing of it, in these latter words of the Text, *And they would not come.*

We will begin with the first, and therein again, we have many particulars to take notice of and speak upon.

As first, a description of the *Jews*, the parties invited, by a word wherein their privilege is gloriously held forth: They were the bidden ones, or the called ones, as the word signifies. Such as before the coming of Christ were entrusted which the Oracles of God, and were Gods People.

Κεκλημένους.

Secondly, The instruments of their present invitation are said to be his Servants, Gods Servants:

Δούλους.

Thirdly, The ground of these Servants proceeding in the work: God sent them that

E

had

had a Commission for what they did, Of these in order.

They which were bidden to the marriage (to wit anciently) must first have the News when Supper is ready. καλέσαι κεκλημένους, By these words saith *Piscator*, are understood those which a little before the preparation of the Marriage feast, were invited to it. The like Phrase we have 1 Sam. 9. 13. And afterwards they eat that be bidden, that is such as are inviced. Hence this Doctrine.

Intelliguntur invitati, qui paulo ante apparatus nuptialis convivii, invitati ad illud fuerunt.

That the Lords bidden Guests are readyest to be called unto his sons Marriage.

Here they were the Jews, Gods selected People, Gods peculiar People, and treasure above all People. *Exod. 19. 5.* And so, *Deut. 7. 6.* *The Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a speciall People unto himself, above all People that are upon the face of the earth.* They were bidden in *Abraham. Gen. 17. 7.* And I (saith God) will establish my Covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee in their Generations for an everlasting Covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. It was their priviledge and dignity to have Gods Oracles committed to them. *Rom. 3.*

1. 2. *They were Israelites, to whom pertained*

the

are first to be invited to the Supper.

51

the adoption, and the Glory and the Covenants, and the giving of the Law, and the service of God, and the promises. Rom. 9. 4

And there is some reason or illustration of the truth of it. For such are as it were re- Reason.

gifted in Gods note-book for this very purpose. It is an allusion (saith Mr. Calvin) to such men as write a Catalogue of their chief friends, whom they intend to make their Guests, when they make a Feast. O say they, we must needs bid such a one, and we cannot leave out such a one, &c. So is it with the Lord, so he is wont to deal. Mat. 10. 5, 6. These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go into not the way of the Gentiles, and into any City of the Samaritans enter ye not: But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And cap. 15, ver. 24. (saith Christ) I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. To make this out more fully, that it may be fitted for use to be made of it. The Lord being about to reform his Church in all places of the word (for the time is at hand of glorious things to be done for and in Christs Church) looks upon England his old acquaintance, for whom he hath done much often, to whom of old he hath been many ways gracious. England, I say, shall have a fair offer, they shall be first bid-

E 2

den,

den, yea bidden again. O *England* (saith the Lord) Thee have I known of old; I rooted out Popery out of thee; I delivered thee in 88 from the *Spanish* Invasion; I discovered the hellish Gun-powder-Plot; I have for thy sake poured contempt upon *Princes, and shattered Nobles*: Armies commanded by Royalty, have been brought to nothing, &c. Now take me while I am offering my self to thee in this my reforming time. And so to this very place may we apply it; O *Tavistock*, I have afforded that to thee, which I have not to all Towns. Hath not the Lord striven with you in former times, in regard of that powerfull Ministry you enjoyed? And hath he not (as it were) made you the first in Church-resurrection in these parts? Doth not the Lord even beg you to accept of him? Doth he not suffer many abuses in his Servants among you? well, what shall I say? You are fairly offered, you are first offered, you have the Refuse (as we use to say.)

Mr.
G.H.

So much for the Explanation.

Use. I. The first use shall be for information, to store you with this one truth among others, That it is a priviledge for a people to live in the visible Church, and under Ordinances, to be within sound of this Bow-bell of the Gospel.

For

For when times of discoveries of God, and reformation come about, these shall have the priviledge to be served first, at least with offers. And it shall be their fault (as we say) if they partake not of the richest effusions of the spirit that are going. And doubtless, then it must needs follow, that, To make light of Gospel priviledges is a fearfull sin; as may be gathered out of the following *verses* of this Parable. I wish from my heart that you would be convinced of this truth, What a priviledge it is to enjoy the sound and saving Ministry of Christ. And also of that consequent truth, *viz.* That if he be *curst* that *continueth not in every thing that is writen in the book of the Law to do them.* Gal. 3. then much more to have an invitation, an offer of Christ, and not to regard it (of which more shall be said in due place.) It is an unworthy part to see Christ scorned and rejected, and his word slighted, and his blood trampled on, and not to be moved with it, not to weep (with *Paul Philip. 3 18.*) that the cross of Christ hath Enemies: But to be actors in this Tragedy, must needs be most hideous and abominable.

In the next place, you invited Guests, may *Use. 1.* come boldly being bidden. And you may be of good comfort when ever God makes a

least to his Church, he will have you in his remembrance. His old Chapmen shall have the first sight of his new stuff. I do not mean that we must look for New Doctrines, but fuller discoveries of the old faith, which was once delivered to the Saints, but hath a while been in Captivity in *Babylon*.

Use. 3. And now if this mercy be vouchsafed in any sort, be bold to take out the utmost of it. And be thankfull for this priviledge, and improve it to your advantage. For the greater the priviledge the greater the mercy; the greater will our judgement be, if we do not improve it. Beloved it will be easier for *Pagans*, then for Christians (I mean) so called; and for those poor holes that have scarce a good Sermon in a year, then for such as have much of God in this kind, if their thankfulness and obedience be not answerable.

Quest. But how should a People or a person improve this Priviledge?

Answer. By coming at the first call, not to delay nor put off, lest God should swear once against you, should fall a sealing you and searing you.

So much of the first, the parties invited, call the called one.

The

The parties imployed in the work, are next to be taken notice of.

And sent forth his servants: That is, such as were Gods Servants in speciall. This word is excellently joyned with another in the 3. chap. of Amos ver 7. The words there are, *Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the Prophets.* Here you see Prophets are called the Lords Servants; So Ministers also 2 Tim. 2. 24. *And the servant of the Lord must not strive, &c.* And that it is to be understood of teachers, is evident out of the following vers. 25. vers. *In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves, &c.*

Well then, the Lesson hence to be learned, *Doct.* is, *That Gods speciall servants, Prophets, Apostles, Ministers, are his ordinary Instruments to call men to the Wedding supper;* That is, in plain English, to preach and teach. Luke the other Evangelist that records this Parable, sets this punctually down. cap. 14. 17. and in many other verses besides in the Parable.

And the Reason is, because they are fittest Reason. for this employment: It is not for the Masters dignity to go himself; neither yet that such be imployed as have no relation to him, or no Commission from him: but Servants

α' α' α' α' α'
μ. ε. ν. ο. ς.

entertained & put apart or separated unto the Gospel of God Rom. 1. 1. Now to make a man fit for this service, it is best that he be called by Gods Grace, or to the state of Grace himself: Yet is it not so *absolutely* necessary, as to conclude *every one* that is a lawfull Minister, is certainly a gracious man. A man may be sanctified to his *calling*, that is not sanctified *savingly* in his *person*. But this is *absolutely* necessary, that these Servants be *fitted* for their work, that is, that Teachers of others be *first taught* themselves.

Now these *teachings* of God are of two sorts; the one *extraordinary* and *immediate*; So Amos 7. 14. 15. *I was neither Prophet, nor son of a Prophet, &c. And the Lord said unto me, go Prophecie unto my People Israel.* The other way is *by the means and Ministry of man*. Now where *revelation* is wanting, this kind of teaching and learning is necessary.

There are and have ben four sorts of Teachers in the World.

1. Some taught by God and not by men.
2. Some taught of men and not of God.
3. Some taught by God through the means of men.

4 Others,

4. Others, (bold Bayards,) that never were taught either by God or men. And yet many there are that take upon them to teach and interpret Scripture, that are poorly fitted, that cannot be said *to abide in the things that they have learned.* 2 Tim.

3. 14.

But because the matter is of great weight, in these *speaking times* (as they Phrase it) I will a little stay upon it, for satisfaction to such as are desirous of it.

First therefore you must know that every one that taketh upon him to be a servant of the Lord in this work of preaching, must be taught *one way or another*. And therefore they are to be blamed that take upon them to be teachers of the Gospel, and were never taught by *revelation*, or by any *ordinary way*.

Secondly, They must teach what they have *learned*; they therefore are to be blamed, that deliver opinions which they never learned from the Scriptures or any Ministry.

Thirdly, That it is most orderly that Gospel-Preachers be ordained, and put apart by men, according to rule for Preaching.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, That yet in times and places, where there is a common corruption of Doctrine or a common abuse of the office of teaching, and neglecting of ordaining Godly as well as learned men, there sometimes men Godly, *competently* learned, by an *instinct as it were* for a time may teach and preach, and find the Lord with them. But all must take heed of nulling offices, and officers, and also of refusing, when they may *orderly* have an *outward* call, to accept of it. For although God upon *great* changes doth dispenſe with some things about his Church for a time, as he did with circumcision in the Wilderness; Yet the *first* opportunities must be taken of returning to the *exact* rules of the Word for preaching and other Church-Ordinances.

But I return whence I digressed, to shew you, that not all but *Some* special servants of the Lord, are made use of for this work of winning People to Christ, in the way of publike teaching. For otherwise, all are to *improve* their interests, and to be (as we may say) *coadjutors* to the Gospel-Teachers.

Use. I. Now the first use shall be to let us know, that it is a great unhappiness to be without these *servants* of Christ; and that such are not like to be Christs *Guests*, that want them.

• Miserable

Miserable are those towns and villages, that are without faithfully-Preaching Ministers; And wo to such as live under *blind guides*. *Mat. 15. 14.* They are in danger, both Priests and People, of falling into the ditch.

And then it is a happiness, and blessing, *Use. 2.* to enjoy these Servants of the Lord; and especially if we find the *hand of the Lord* with them; that is an expression, *Acts 11. 21.*

Question. *But how is that to be known?*

Answer, It is to be known by the effects there mentioned, *And a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord.* O, 'Tis a mercy to live under the sound of the voice of a servant of the Lord. Gods immediate voice no man is able to hear. *Exod. 20. 19.* And they said unto Moses, *Speak thou with us and we will hear, but let not God speak with us lest we die.* So *Deut. 5. 25.* the presence of God is terrible, who may abide it? Therefore God hath appointed our brethren to teach us familiarly, and to be in his stead among us; and it is our happiness to enjoy them, if we could see it.

And lastly (to end this point) it serves *Use. 3.* to teach us, that these men, whom the Lord imployes

Ministers not to be despised.

imployes as his *special* servants, ought to be esteemed; although it be their portion to be (as *David* was) the *song of the drunkards*, *Psal.* 69. 12. And to be despised by *yong children*, as *Job* was *cap.* 19. 18. Yea by *yong men* whose fathers he would have disdained to have set with the dogs of his flock. *cap.* 30. 1. All the silly (yet proud) fools, and all the knaves in the country, think that Gospel-Preachers are fit to be made a *Parable* of reproach and object of despight. O how do some among us ruffle it in the second and third Generations, whose Ancestors infamously scrapt a little dung together, and ended their dayes remarkably ! But this ought not so to be, neither will it be so among them that fear God; Neither let it be so among you. For,

Mor.

1.

First, To dishonour them, is to dishonour God. *Luke* 10. 16. *He that heareth you, heareth me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth me,* (saith Christ to his Disciples,) and this is to despise him that sent Christ, as it is in the same verse.

2.

Secondly, If you carry your selves respectfully towards them, it will encourage them in the Lords work.

3.

And Thirdly, It will be for your own benefit.

Both

Both these are to be proved, *Heb. 13. 17.* Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit your selves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you. And indeed experience teacheth, that when the persons of Ministers are out of esteem, their Doctrine lies the more open to prejudice and misconstruction.

Question. But how shall I know *Quest.* whether I esteem them as I ought to do or no?

I answer, If thou look upon them as *Answ.* Ambassadors, sent of God, for this very end, that People may believe in Christ, and dost so come to hear what they say, &c. this is a good note of such as are sound Christians, and have the spirit of God. *1 Cor. 14. 37.* If any man think himself to be a Prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge, that the things that I write unto you, are the commandments of the Lord. And no doubt, such as are spiritual, will so acknowledge: and in their eyes, the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things, will be beautifull. *Rom. 10. 15.*

Thus I have finished the second particular observed in the first offer of Christ to the
Jews,

Jews, his Ancient acquaintance.

I now come to the third and last, to wit, *the ground and Original of this action*, of calling people to come to Christ: And that is a Commission given (*he sent forth*) as it is in the Text. The servants *go not* untill God (whose messengers they be) sends them. These words (*he sent forth his servants*, are not only in this third *vers.* (I am now upon) but also in the next, the fourth; and likewise *ver. 9.* a Commission is *expressly* given unto them. So that we may have good ground for this Doctrine,

Doct.

That such as take upon them to invite People to Christ, and to Preach, are of Gods sending in a speciall manner, if they be of the right stamp.

I will give them Pastors after mine own heart. Jerem. 3. 15. Such as run before they be sent, have success accordingly; But they have somewhat else to do, and *all trades must live*, (as we say) and so must they. And this sort of men (though called *Ministers*) are the very *tail* of men. It is the part of a servant to have the word from his *Master* first, and then to do faithfully, what they are Commissionated and commanded to do. It was the Lords complaint, by the Prophet *Jer. c. 23. 21. I have not sent these Prophets yet they*

they rann: I have not spoken to them, yet they Propheſied. And when the ſpirit of a man hath received a Call from the ſpirit of Chriſt, and knows it ſelf to be ſent of God, it will put him upon ſtrict duty,

First, To deliver nothing but what is warranted. 1 Cor. 11. 23 For I have received of the Lord, that which alſo I delivered unto you. And. 1 John 1. ver. 3.

And Secondly, To extend his gifts to the utmoſt advantage of the giver, and benefit of thoſe that a man is ſent unto. 1 Pet. 4. ver. 10. As everyone hath received the gift, ſo miniſter the ſame one to another, as good ſtewards of the manifold grace of God.

Laſtly, He muſt and ſhall know on whoſe errand he goes, whoſe Meſſenger he is. So 1 Pet. 4. v. 11. If any man ſpeak, let him ſpeak as the Oracles of God: if any man Miniſter, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth.

Know therefore (for the firſt uſe) that the *Uſe. 1.*
Call and comming of Miniſters of the Goſpel, is of God; it is not without Authority. They are in Gods ſtead; they muſt give account to him that hath ſent them.

And therefore they ſhould not be deſpiſed and opposed as they are by fooliſh proud *Uſe. 2.*
People. It is thought now among us to be a ſufficient

sufficient cause of injustice, iniquity, and oppression, because Ministers shall not be masters of the Town, because they shall not have their will; which yet indeed is Gods will. Alas neighbours, are we not men as well as you? Why then should we not enjoy our common priviledges as well as you? are we unworthy to be heard because we are Ministers? how low would ye bring us? But I desire not to provoke, but rather to convince, that you might not be found despisers of God, in despising, contradicting and opposing of us in the way of our well doing.

Use. 3. But Thirdly, You that obey the Lords Call to you by us, doubt not of kind welcom; We call not of our own heads; He sent us forth that will make good whatsoever we promise you according to our instructions that we have received from him.

Use. 4. And lastly, be perswaded to hearken to our *Call*, in regard of the authority of the Sender. It will not be well taken under any pretence whatsoever, to slight the Lords gracious offers, to trample under foot his blessed Ordinances. If the messenger sent, please you not, yea suppose you had just cause of your displeasure: yet that will not excuse your slighting of the Sender, and his gracious messages.

messages. Do not think that what we do by vertue of the Authority which the Lord hath given us, shall be let fall by him; He will require an account of our sowing from all sorts of ground where we sow. He telleth our fleetings; He puts our tears into his bottle; and our groans under your wrath of pride and folly, are written in his book. The Lord bless unto you these words; You and I shall appear at the barr of his tribunal upon this very controversie between us. And so much of the first part of this Text.

The great ingratitude of the Jews, comes next to be spoken of, out of these words, *And they would not come.*

There is an emphasis in these words, *they could not come.*

Would they not come? why would they not come? Surely, there can be no other reason given, but this, *they would not because they would not.* So that here is intended to be set forth by the Holy Ghost.

First, The willfull contempt of the People of the Jews.

And Secondly, From the word (*they*) is to be noted, the generality of their wicked wilfullness. *They*, it is not said *some*

F

of

of them, but they, that is (as it were) all of them ; Surely the greatest part of them by farr. They were upon the matter (as we use to say) all hanged in a string : never a barrel the better herring. *They would not come.*

Beloved, it is a very sad story, That God should have a *peculiar* people, whom he calls *his own* ; John 1. 11. *He came unto his own, and his own received him not* ; But that there should be such a general defection and blindness on the whole Nation, (a ver few only excepted not worth the speaking of) is a *sad* aggravation of the condition of the Jews, so pitifull in bondage to *Wicked Will*. And is it so in *Israel* ? And shall we wonder if it be so among us ? But I will keep to my method which I have accustomed you unto.

This shall be the Doctrine,

Doct.

That the great Grace of God, in inviting men to the Marriage of his Son Christ, is by the most of folk willfully refused or neglected; That at least it is *neglected*, but here *wilfully* refused.

Quest.

Question. But you will say (perhaps) *Why do you put into the Doctrine this word (neglected) seeing you have so urged the emphaticallness of the words before?*

To

To this I *Answer*, That the greater contains the lesser; where there is wilfull contempt, there must needs be careless neglect. Therefore no wrong is done to the Text. And I would lay the Doctrine as large as might be, that it might be extended in the Application to the greater advantage of all the hearers. *Ans^w.*

We read of such a general distemper 2 Kings 17. 13. 14. 15. But I will but read the 14. v. (because the time runneth apace) mark it. *Notwithstanding they would not hear, but hardened their necks like to the neck of their fathers, that did not believe in the Lord their God.* And so of Judah we read 2 Chro. 24. 19. *Yet he sent Prophets to them to bring them again to the Lord their God, and they testified against them: but they would not hear.* And there is the like complaint Psal. 81. 11. *but my people would not hearken to my voice: and Israel would none of me.* Such another instance is John 5. 40. *And ye will not come to me (saith Christ to the Jews) that ye might have life.*

Now the reason of this rejecting of God and his Son Jesus, is, because people are married already to their sinfull lusts. So *Isaiah* 65. 1. 2. The Lord there complains of his spreading out his hands all the day unto rebellious *Reason.*

bellious People, which walked in away that was not good, after their own thoughts. Now when men either leane to their own wisdom, or are *Wedded* to their own will, or have any carnal, worldly or sinfull distemper in their hearts, and do inebriate themselves with the present comforts of the world, though the things in themselves be *lawfull*; or have inordinate cares, or lastly do harbour and cling to any base lust whatsoever: here there is no room for Christ, he can have no entertainment. Strong lusts hang upon men as an hereditary disease, and they must not be crossed; If you would oppose them, they swell the more, as a water that is palli-
sadoed up, swells and overruns all. This is the reason that the gracious offer of Christ is so contemned and despised.

Use.

1. Then first learn, that the enjoying of the outward means of Grace, is no certain or infallible argument to prove people to be happy. People may live under *excellent* vouchsafements, and yet be of the number of negligent and *unprofitable* hearers, yea despisers of them. Many do deceive themselves in this kind. Because they *eat* and *drink* in Gods presence, &c. they think there are *Jews* and *Pagans* enough to fill up hell. But they shall have the *worser* place in Hell,
that

that have *glorious* means of Grace, and *despise* them, or though they do but slight them. What is a man the better to have abundance of good food, if he will not eat of it? If Christ be offered, and people will not *receive*; As it is recorded of the *Jews*, *John* 1. 11. That when Christ *came* unto them, they would not *receive* him, and therefore had not the power or priviledge of being the *Sons of God*. Their case is the worse, not the better, that Christ is among them, but they do not *receive* him, nor submit to him.

The second Use, is to set forth the greatness of their sin that will not submit to Christ, that will not *receive* him. They expose themselves to great danger; their sin is great; for they set light by Gods Grace, as it is said *ver. 5. of this chap. They made light of it, they cared not for Christ his Supper*. Herein people do even *despite the spirit of Grace*, *Heb. 10. 29. They tread under foot the son of God, and count the blood of the sovenant an unholy thing*. Yea they *grieve Gods spirit*; which is condemned, at least dehorted from, *Ephes. 4. 30.* And indeed do but consider, Would it not grieve a man, when he hath made a feast for his friends, and sent his messengers to call

Use. 2.

them thereunto, if they should peremptorily reject his kindness and good will? Now here the danger must be very great, this contempt being offered to the King of Heaven and Earth; Surely they shall smart for it. We read *2 Chron. 24. 19.* of this sin, to wit, that when the Prophets (sent to the people, to bring them back to the Lord,) had testified against them, *they would not hear.* Therefore it is denounced against them, *vers. 20.* by *Zachariah* the son of *Jehoiadab* the Priest, that they should not prosper, and that the Lord had forsaken them. It is true they stoned him for his labour, *ver. 21.* But yet they found it true enough what he said afterward. You may see more to this purpose *Jer. 18. ver. 12.* to the 18. their sin is, they departed from the ancient path, to walk in a way not cast up. They made their will their Law; And their punishment is, to be made desolate, and a perpetual hissing, to be scattered as with a East wind before the Enemy. And (oh sad business, tremble if there be any life in thee) *I will* (saith the Lord in the 17. ver. of that chap.) *shew them the back, and not the face in the day of their Calamity.* *Mat. 23. 37. 38.* ye may read there what the punishment of this sin is. The sin is (and ye would not) the punishment (your house

house is left unto you desolate.) Luk. 14. 24. For I say unto you, that none of those men that were bidden shall taste of my Supper. So again had I time, I might read unto you Luk. 19. 42. 43. 44. A sad Prophecie of the destruction of Jerusalem, which afterwards came to pass. Heb. 10. 28. 29. He that despised Moses Law, died without mercy under two or three witnesses. Of how much sorer punishment (suppose ye) shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God? &c. This great sin is in England, yea in this very place. Read therefore (for it is yours) Isaiah 30. ver. 8. to the 15. Now go write it before them in a Table, and note in a Book, that it may be for the time to come for ever and ever: that this is a rebellious People, lying children, children that will not hear the Law of the Lord, &c. Then at the 12. ver. begins the sentence; Wherefore, thus saith the holy one of Israel, because ye despise this word, and trust in oppression and perverseness and stay thereon: therefore this iniquity shall be to you as a breach ready to fall swelling out in a high wall, whose breaking cometh suddenly at an instant. And he shall break it as the breaking of the potters Vessel &c.

Lastly, Let me perswade some of you (fish Use. 3.
there is little hope that I shall all or the most)

heed ye be not of the number of those that
Mot. 1. say *they will not come.*

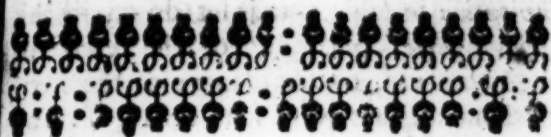
To move you to be the more wary of this
 sin, know it is a sin we are naturally prone
 unto, to pout and mogg.

2. Secondly, We have many bad examples
 in this place, I have hardly known the like
 in any place where I have been, therefore we
 have the more cause to beware.

3. Thirdly, Without fail, as the Lord *liveth*,
 they shall know sorrow that slight Christ
 offered in Gospel-Ordinances.

So much of the 3. *ver.* containing the first
 offer of Christ to the Jews, and their refusal;
 and so much at this time.

The



The Fourth Sermon.

Matth. 22. 4, 5.

Again he sent forth other servants, saying, Tell them which are bidden; behold, I have prepared my dinner; mine oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready: come unto the Marriage. But they made light of it, and went their ways; one to his Farm, and another to his Merchandise.

WE are out of this verse and the following unto the eight, to speak of the second invitation of the *Jews* to come to Christ: We will take notice, first of the

in-

invitation it self, as it is set down in this fourth *verse*. Secondly, of the *success* of the Invitation, or the manner of their entertainment that were sent, *ver. 5, 6.* And Lastly, we shall come unto the *behaviour* of the King, upon the course and unworthy entertainment of his gracious Message and of his Messengers, which is set down in the seventh *verse*.

We will begin with the first branch, which is in the fourth *verse*. And we finde it illustrated, 1. By the circumstance of time, when the Servants were sent, in the word (*again.*) 2. By the Instruments made use of for that purpose (*other Servants.*) 3. By the manner of the Message, which these other servants were to deliver; it is full of grate and sweetness; *Tell them, that were bidden, I have prepared my dinner, &c.* Bid them come to the Marriage.

Again; This word sets out much of God, in point of long-suffering and patience. Notwithstanding the *Jews*, had formerly rejected God's grace, and *would not come in*: yet God will not give them over so, but *sends again.* *Again he sent &c.*

Doct.

We may hence learn, That God in the offer of Grace, is wonderfull patient. The truth is, God is wonderfully excellent in all his

his makings forth: but now we are to speak of the patience of God as it is shewed and exercised to mankind. But I will endeavour to make out to you what kinde of beam of God that is which we call *patience*. I will not meddle with the patience of Christ: that (I mean) which he shewed in our nature which he took; but of that which is attributed to God, and is handled among his divine perfections.

There is not *such* a patience in God (as the word properly signifies) which is versed in griefs or calamities, but in *injuries* and wrongs. As a King is said to be patient which moderately beareth abuses, and contains himself from revenge which he might easily take if he would. O this is a glorious vertue in man; But in God it is a most glorious beam, to wit, when he acteth this way, to suffer sinners, and not to take vengeance upon them. This *infinitely* excelleth the patience of the most patient men in the world: because the abuses which are offered to God, are infinitely greater then those which are offered to men; and because he doth most distinctly see them all, and doth most sharply *resent* them, and hath in readiness wayes to take vengeance, and yet he withholds. He knows all that he hath done
for

*Posse &
nolle no-
bile.*

*Sinul in
conspetu
Dei sunt
omnia be-
neficia que
ipse in nos,
& omnes
injurie,
&c. Les-
sus.*

for us, and on the other side our ingrati-
tude. He sees all the abominations com-
mitted in the world; which did the most
patient man in the world see but one hour,
he would certainly burn the world the next
(saith a late VVriter.) And although God
be not capable of grief and sorrow, yet he
very bitterly takes his dishonour, and is
provoked to revenge. He perceives the un-
worthiness of sin; and that his own Majesty,
& his unspeakable goodness shewed to the
creature is vilepended. He is armed with
thousands of Plagues, and yet *forbears*: yea,
continues his former benefites; expecting,
and stirring up to Repentance, and to come
to his sons Marriage. Admirable patience!
So with the old World did God deal
Gen. 6. 3. 1 Pet. 3. 20. with others Gen.
18. 24. Jerem. 31. cap 5. ver. 1. Luke
13. 34.

Reason.

And the reason is rendred 2 Pet. 2. 9.
Because he is not willing that any should pe-
rish, but that all should come to Repentance.
Ezek. 18. 32. For I have no pleasure in the
death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God:
wherefore turn your selves and live ye; and
so cap. 33. 11. Hos. 6. 4. O Ephraim, what
shall I do unto thee? O Judah, what shall I
do unto thee? &c. and cap. 41. 8. How
should

Should I give thee up Ephraim? How shall I deliver thee Israel? how shall I make thee as Admah? How shall I set thee as Zeboim? Mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together.

So then this shall be the Doctrine, That Doct. God in the offer of grace, (notwithstanding shamefull repulses) is wonderfull patient.

He sends again, and again. Again he sent forth other servants, &c.

Then certainly we have no cause to complain of Gods impatience. Use. 1.

And they that reject grace, are without excuse. They cannot say it was not offered to them. Indeed Gods patience occasions perverseness through the wickedness of peoples hearts. *Psal. 78. verses 17. to the 22. and 37, 38, 39. and 56. 59, 60. verses.* In those places the marvellous untowardness of the Israelites is shewed: but yet God tempteth no man, but woes, and argues, and allures. And they that do abuse his patience, will know one day that they had a fair offer. O think upon it. Use. 2.

Thirdly, If God be so gracious, and so patient: then surely he will not cast away any that desire Grace, though by reason of their corruption they come slowly forward. Though, they be like *smoking flax*, Matth. Use. 3.

12. 20. *A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgement into victory.* If there be any hope of thy recovery, the heavenly Physician will not give thee over.

To conclude this point, The fourth and last Use shall be to perswade all to take heed that they abuse not Gods patience, but thankfully improve it to their own benefit.

4.
Motive.
Les a pati-
entia fit
furor.

Consider, to stir you up a little, the abuse of Gods patience will at last provoke the Lord to cast down heavy judgements. *Psal.* 78. 49. *He cast upon them the fierceness of his anger, wrath, and indignation, &c.* *Rom.* 2. 4. 5. *Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness, and forbearance and long suffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? But after thy hardness, and impenitent heart, treasurest up unto thy self wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgement of God. I might give you instances and examples, of the Old World, of the Sodomites, of the Jews.* But I had rather shew you how you might improve Gods patience, and not abuse it. For I cannot but think that you see

Means. the necessity of the work.

I. Therefore know, first that speedy repentance

tance must prevent wrath, and is a way to improve Gods patience to our advantage. Joel 2. 12, 13, 14. Isaiah 55. 6, 7. Friends, there is no sin so great, no sins so many, no abuse of Gods grace so grievous, but repentance will help all.

Secondly and Lastly, improve Gods patience, by a godly imitation of his example therein, *Matth. 5. 44, 45. Phil. 4. 5.* 2.

So far of the circumstance of time. VVe come next to the instruments, other servants. Again he sent forth other servants.

The Lord is not only patient in the offer of *Doctr.* Grace: but very diligent in providing means and instruments to draw men. That shall be the next Doctrine. You see God doth not presently upon their refusal give over, but sends other servants.

And the Reason is (as before it hath been said) *Reason.* He would have no man to perish, but that all should come to repentance. Understand by his will, his word, his approbation and liking of it; but what he willeth from *Voluntas* everlasting, that he worketh and bringeth *approbati-* to pass: and so saith David, *Whatsoever the* *onis & effectiois.* Lord pleased, that did he in heaven, in earth, in the Sea, and in all places. But to the matter: The Lord (I say) is not only patient to wait

wait, but *diligent* in providing means ; here is another glorious beam of the Deity shining forth ; *His Spirit strives with men*, to do them good. *He giveth gifts to men* for the sake of mankinde : He exposeth his Ordinances to contempt, and his servants to injurious abuses, *that men may not perish, but have life everlasting.*

Use 1.

The first use is for *Information*, and it teacheth us, that then the *use of means* is necessary for this purpose ; to wit, that men may hear of Christ, believe in Christ, and be saved by Christ. That therefore is a vain conceit of many, that think Grace will come without the use of the Means. And therefore, though men will take pains in the use of the means about worldly matters : yet they regard not to use means about the gaining of grace. And this will be their condemnation, as it is written (*Job. 3. 19.*) *And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather then light, because their deeds were evil.* Many will not so much as give the word a hearing. Such we read of 2 Kin. 17 13, 14, 15. *Yet the Lord testified against Israel, and against Judah, by all the Prophets, and by all the Seers, saying, Turn you from your evil ways, and keep my commandments, and my Statutes, according to all*

all the Law which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you by my servants the Prophets. Notwithstanding they would not hear, but hardened their necks like to the necks of their Fathers, that did not believe in the Lord their God. And they rejected his Statutes, and his Covenant that he made with their fathers, and his testimonies which he testified against them, and they followed vanity, and became vain, and went after the heathen that were round about them, concerning whom the Lord had charged them that they should not do like them. So Jer. 18. 11. The Lord is to his work, exhorting, menacing, using means, to make them there spoken of to return from their evil way. But in the 12. ver. you shall see their behaviour. And they said, There is no hope, but we will walk after our own devices; and we will every one do the imagination of his evil heart. And chap. 25. ver. 4, 5, 6, 7. to the same purpose we may read a large Discourse of the truth of my Doctrine, and the untoward spirit and behaviour of the people, though to their own hurt (as it is there written.) But I will enlarge no more upon this Use.

I come to a second. Here in this Doctrine of the diligence of God, in providing means and instruments, to draw People to Christ,

Use. 2.

G

we

we have a ground of comfort unto such as truly desire Grace and Mercy at the hands of God. They cannot *desire* it more then the Lord doth (to use Scripture expressions and language) nor be more willing, or diligent to use means for their good, then he is. And therefore assuredly there will be a concurrence with them, in their prayers and endeavours, and a condiscention to their desires and requests.

Use 3.

Take notice of this, O all ye people, let the Lords kindness herein be accepted. Joyn with the Lord in these actions. Let us do it: We have many Motives.

Mot. 1.

For first, God will hereby be glorified; the contrary will be to his great dishonour.

2.

Secondly, the benefit will be our own; for it is the only way to get grace. *Ask, and ye shall have; seek and ye shall finde; knock, and it shall be opened unto you, Matth. 7. 7.*

3.

Thirdly and Lastly, It will be a good example to others; our example may draw others, as bad examples do spread like a leprosie. So much for that.

We come in the third place to the *Mess- sage* that the Lord wills to be delivered. *Tell them that are bidden, Behold I have prepared*

red my dinner ; my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready; come unto the Marriage.

There is not much in these words which hath not been spoken of already. Only mark, here is an invitation to a Marriage. *Venite (inquit) non ad labores, aut ad luctum, sed ad Nuptias.* Marlorat. He doth not say, come to labours or lamentation, but to a marriage. *Per terrena autem adumbrat Christus Cœlestia, &c.* Here, by earthly things are shadowed out heavenly. But that which I shall a little fasten upon (and yet I shall not be long neither) is the opportunity offered ; tis supper time, *all things are ready ;* therefore come and take it whilst it is going (as we say) whilst it is to be had.

This shall be the Doctrine or observation, *Dott.* That the opportunity of the season for the gaining of grace, ought to be a special Argument to perswade people to come, &c.

It is an Argument that is wont to be of Reason. special force with men concerning their worldly affairs. Men will go to Market upon the Market-day ; and make hay, whilst the Sun shines; cut their Corn when it is ripe; much more should it be a prevailing Argument in more weighty matters. *For man also*

knoweth not his time ; as the fishes that are taken in an evil net, and as the birds that are caught in the snare ; so are the sons of men snared in an evil time, when it falleth suddenly upon them, Eccles. 9. 12. Great use is made by the Spirit of God, of this Argument in many places of Scripture. I will quote and read some, Prov. 9. 1, 2, 3. *Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewen out her seven pillars, she hath killed her beasts, she hath mingled her wine : she hath also furnished her Table. She hath sent forth her Maidens, &c.* Isaiah 55. 6, 7. *Seek ye the Lord while he may be found ; call ye upon him while he is near ; Let the wicked forsake his way, &c.* Matth. 3. 2. *Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.* 2 Cor. 6. 2. *For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee : behold now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation.* Heb. 3. 13. *But exhort one another daily, while it is called to day, lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin ; from all which Places this truth is plainly made good, that the opportunity and Seasons of Grace are to be regarded. And therefore we will now come to the Uses of the Point.*

Use 1.

And first, it lays great blame on them that neglect

neglect the pretious opportunities that are put into their hand, that do not make hay while the Sun shines, that do not repent while it is called to day. Remember the foolish Virgines.

And next, here is comfort for wise Virgines, such as *take* Gods Grace when it is offered, such as take oyle in their Vessels with their Lamps, *Mat. 25. 4.* Such as are *faithfull* *ver. 21.* They shall enter in with the Bridegroom into the Marriage, *ver. 10.* They shall enter into the joy of their Lord, *ver. 21.* *Use. 2.* afore-named.

Lastly, hearken to this serious admonition, that I am about to give you. It is through the great mercy of God, that you enjoy now a *season* of Grace; Gods dinner is *prepared* &c. O how have I been deceived in you! What fair promises were made, if the Lord would but let you see the face of a Minister of your own again? How did the Lord seem to hide his face from you for a great while? *Use. 3.*

Consider more particularly, Its *Grace* and mercy, not desert, that you are *once more* invited. We are not worthy to be *bidden* Guests, not the best of us all; yet we are, *Motive.*

Secondly, This renewed season is *uncertain*,
G 3 *tain,*

2.

tain, how long it will continue. Friends, it is like be a catching harvest : the base carriage of the great Ones among you (the like whereof I have hardly met with wherever I have lived) and of the most besides , threatens a removal of the *means* of Grace from you. There is such a deal of pride and heart-burning, and despite shewed to the People and wayes of God among us , as that we may justly fear the *season* of Grace will not be long. Gospel seasons in *glory*, are not usually long.

3. Thirdly, If you will *consent* to *accept* of Christ now while he is going, and take him to be your Priest, Prophet and King, you will do your selves the greatest pleasure that possibly can be imagined. Ye shall go in with the *Bridegroom* into the Marriage. The Lord set home what hath been said: *Amen, Amen.*

I proceed. *ver. 5. But they made light of it, &c.*

Here begins the second Branch, under the second Invitation of the Jews. The *success* or the manner of the entertainment of this gracious offer, again renewed. Some *neglect* it, as it is in this *ver.* Others *maliciously oppose* it, in the next *verse.*

In

In the *vers.* now in hand, two things are to be spoken of;

First, To shew you how the Jews stood affected unto the precious season of Grace vouchsafed them : *viz.* they made light of it.

Secondly, The ground and occasion of their light esteeming of it; to wit, their overprizing of their worldly profits and Commodities, their Farms and Commodities of Merchandizing, their shops, and their livings.

For the first; *They made light of Christ*, they had no care. (as the word signifieth) ^{α' μάλ' η} _{παντες.} they regarded him not nor his Salvation, as a thing of no worth, they did set it at naught and despised it.

You see this Lesson plainly may hence be learned.

That the precious seasons and means of Grace Doct.
are little regarded by worldly-minded People.
Or Thus. *It is the property of Worldly men to slight Christ, if they may get Worldly things.* Covetousness is a great cause of irreligiousness.

The Lord sends forth his Servants, to invite them to come to the Marriage of his Son; but they had no great minde to it. So their

Covetousness a cause of irreligiouſness.

Ancestors long before, 2 Kings 17. 13. 14. So God complains Psalm 81. 11. *But my People would not harken to my voice : and Israel would none of me.* So Isai. 65. 2. Till Christ come with the power of his spirit into worldly mens hearts, there is nothing but raking and scraping together the dung of the World. You may peruse Luk. 19. 41. 42. 43. and 44. ver. The sin is, *they knew not their visitation,* they considered it not; and this puts me upon a Reason of the point, to wit, they know not the worth of it; this is the reason they put such a low price upon the seasons of Grace. *Having the understanding darkned, being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart.* Ephes. 4. 18. And they give themselves to other wayes. ver. 19. Men that have not learned Christ, have no understanding, no judgement; they are bewitched. And such as go about to hinder them from walking in their evil wayes, they account them troublesome persons. So Ahab accounted Eliab, 1 Kings 18. 17. *Art thou he that troubleth Israel?* and his Enemy, cap. 21. 20. *Hast thou found me O mine Enemy?* But they are their best friends if they could see it, that tell them Gods truth. Paul is become an Enemy to the Galatians for telling

Reason.

ling them the truth, cap. 4. 16. Alas ! What reason can People give why they will not love Gods People ? but only because their minds are worldly, and because the light of God doth not shine in them. The minds of Earthly People are so drawn after the World, that they cannot see the excellency of the love of God, nor the worth of his Salvation. They cannot say with *Simeon*, their eyes have *seen his Salvation*. A worldly man may abhor some sin, because of the baseness of it ; but a Saint doth eschew it with a spiritual heart, which he that is a worldly man hath not. And this is the cause that many sins which indeed have much sinfulness in them, seem no sins, or very little ones, to People that are Worldly ones. Covetous men are usually proud men ; they think themselves none of the worst, and yet upon the matter they are grievous murderers (as will be shewed hereafter (God willing) when we come to the 7. vers.) Pharaoh said, *who is the Lord, &c.* These say in effect, who is Christ ? what is Salvation ye talk so much of ? They are murderers of Christ upon the matter, that do not receive him : they are accursed and accursed 1 Cor. 16. 22. They are self murderers, Soul murderers : They hale their neighbours to hell, within

Luk. 2.

Covetousness a cause of irreligiousness.

what in them lieth, by *refusing* Christ, and by their selling him with *Judas* for the pelf of the World. But I forget where I am.

Use. I.

2. Let us make use of this point. Great is their *folly*, Great is their *fault*, and Great will be the *punishment* of worldly minded men. I shall referr you to some places. *Heb. 10. 28. 29.* There the greatness of the sin is argued by a comparison between *despising of Moses* his Law and neglecting *Christ*. And great language is used to set out the greatness of the latter sin. *Treading under foot the Son of God, counting the blood of the sanctifying Covenant an unholy thing, a doing despite unto the spirit of Grace.* O consider this ye worldlings, ye *Gadarens*, that preferre Hogs (to which ye are ficly compared in Scripture) before Christ. When a great man hath made a feast, and hath sent out for his poor Tenants, and poor Kindred to come to him, promising them great *Legacies* when he dieth, and great gifts in the mean time: and they shall scorn to come, or for a penny matter stay away: would he not be angry, and be ready to vow that they shall never come within his door more? and bid his Servants go out and fetch in the beggars to eat up that meat so prepared? This doth

a little set forth the greatness of their sin, that do *refuse* to come to Christ, to partake of Gospel-Ordinances, to *believe* in the Lord Jesus; which he that doth not, shall be *damm*ed. *Mark 16. 16.*

And as the folly and sin is great, so will the punishment be great also of all such as neglect so great Salvation. *Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded: but ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof: I will also laugh at your calamity, I will mock when your fear commeth, &c.* O what a wofull condition will that man be in, to whom God will be as a hard-hearted man to his Enemy, whose utter ruine he takes pleasure to hear of, whose dolorous groanes he laughs to hear without the least pittie in the World! Not that God is properly, *harsh* or *milde*, *angry* or *pleased*; these are attributed to God, that we might a little behold him who is invisible, and know him who passeth knowledge: They are *effects*, not *affects* (as the Schoolmen distinguish.)

Note.

But lastly, The example of worldly minded men is not to be followed, unless you think it be a sport to be damned. And let me say this word by the way, of the Torments of Hell, that in comparison of them,

Last use.

the

the cruellest Torments that ever were invented, are but as flea bitings. If God will then act as God in execution of justice upon ungodly men, judge what they shall undergo, on whom the full vials of his wrath shall be poured out. The drowning of the old world, the burning of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, the swallowing up of *Korah* and his company, the Soul-melting miseries of *Jerusalem* at its last destruction: Eating of children of a span long, to be feard alive, to be gang'd to death and the like: these are sad stories. But O when Gods righteous judgement shall be (revealed) *Rom. 2. 5.* which till then is as it were covered: tremble ye souls, and shake even into shivers, at the thoughts thereof, what Torments even as long as God shall be, shall be endured.

Walk not therefore with Gospel-despisers. Their practice is hateful to Almighty God. Hurtfull to thine own soul. How wouldst thou look upon that man, that seeks thy life? And wilt thou not with indignation behold them which go about to damn thy Soul? *Who so despiseth the word, shall be destroyed. Prov. 13. 13.* Take heed therefore of following their Example.

Quest.

Quest. But how shall I know whither I make light account of the season of Grace or no? I

I answer, By thy labouring or not labouring *Ans.*
to take the benefit offered thereby. If a man
want a commodity, when the Market or Fair
comes, he will come to seek for it, he will
buy it. If it be dear, yet if it be of *absolute*
necessity (as corn to make bread or the like)
he will say, It is no matter, I must have it,
whatever it cost. If Christ were here in *per-*
son, he would heartily chide many a *Martha,*
who are as bold to plead as she was, and to
blame those bookish Sermon-gadding Ma-
ries, that seem to be more precise then wise,
&c. But yet it will remain for a truth, that
they have chosen that good part which shall
not be taken from them. They which neg- *Luk. 10.*
lect not the *seasons* of Grace, but improve
them to their getting of more acquaintance
with God, and to the further conquest of the
world and their Corruptions, shall receive
exceeding great comfort here; and be at
last inhabitants of the *New Jerusalem,* sing-
ing Hallelujah's to Heavens King and to the
Lamb; where their unexpressible, uncon-
ceivable joy and happiness shall run Paral-
lel with the line of Eternity. I can go no
further at this time. *Bolton.*

The



The fifth Sermon.

Mat. 22. the latter part of the 5. and the 6. v.

*And went their wayes, one to his Farm,
another to his Merchandise. And
the remnant took the Servants, and
intreated them spitefully, and slew
them.*



WE spake last out of this 5. ver.
of the frame of spirit that was
in the Jews, and how they
stood affected towards the
Doctrine of the Gospel, which
was begun to be preached
among them now the second time after the
death and passion of Christ, out of those
words, *They made light of it, that is, they cared*

not

not for it (as it hath been shewed the word here used in the Original signifieth.) Time would not give leave to end that verse then; Therefore that is our next work, To wit, to speak of the ground of this their undervaluing of Christ, and the preaching of the Gospel: which was, their overprizing of worldly things. From which we will handle this last Doctrine out of this fifth verse,

That worldly affairs are a great occasion **Doct.**
unto worldly-minded people, to make them see light by the Gospel and the means of grace and salvation.

It is observed of the Jews, that even to this day, they are a worldly thriving people; where ever they come, within a little while they grow rich. And hence was it, that the generality of them thought it not worth their labour to look after matters of Religion. Even as to this day we finde our honest Hogs just of that temper, which are our best neighbours. For we have so many barking, yea biting dogs, that these grunting Swine seem to be very honest men among us. But yet in truth, you must pardon me; O ye my honest courteous neighbours, I must render evil for your good (as perhaps you will account it, untill your eyes be opened.) You under-

undervalue opportunities of Worship, you attend not the places of worship. Whats the Reason? Surely because ye think that while ye are attending the affairs of the world ye are imployed in your *lawfull* Calling, and therefore that your absence from the Means of grace may very well be excused. And because this is such a visible evil, such a *poison of Asps*, I will speak a little of it by way of digression.

Know therefore, that there is not a man alive that hath not a touch, a tang (as we say) of this evil. Yet nevertheless it is as dangerous an evil, and as incompatible with Grace, when it becomes predominant, as any sin whatsoever. And it is to be noted, that of *all* Sins, seldom are the Saints of God tainted with this in Scripture; And also that such as fall into it, seldom return to their wonted glory and lustre in the Church. VWhereas we find *Peter* denying his Master, and *David* falling into Adultery, and *Lot* into drunkennes &c. yet we finde a returning again, a recovery out of their falls. But when men give themselves to covetousness, we may fitly compare this sin to that *deep ditch* which *Solomon* compares a whore unto: *They that come into it, return not again, neither take they hold of the paths of life:*
You

You have an example in *Demas* how he broke his neck quite, in falling into this ditch of the World. *2 Tim. 4. 10.* We never read of his recovery. Let me a little declame, or if it must be so, exclaim) against these hoggs and Swine. Do you think the land you have is yours? or the Silver and Gold you have is yours? No no, You shall know it is Gods, and that you are but stewards, and shall one day hear that same (*give an account of thy stewardship, for thou maist be no longer steward,* (spoken of *Luk. 16. 2.*) O when a wretched man (a beast rather) shall have an estate thrown into his hands; and shall either hugg it as a God, or wallow in it, as the Swine do in dirty muddy places, and shall never regard to use any part of it to Gods Glory nor to the good of the common wealth, nor to the comfort of the poor; nay some will scarce allow what is needfull for their own nourishment: like *Tantalus* up to the chin in water, and yet dying for thirst, &c. I say, when such a running out of the Soul is in a man after the World, is it likely there will be any great mind upon the things of God, of Christ, of Salvation? Truly no. This sin is like the disease called the *hectic* fever, at first hard to be discerned, but easie to be cured; but at last easie to be known

H

(sure

(sure enough) when it is grown incurable.

When worldliness breaketh out into gross opposition of the wayes of God, (take heed (honest and kind neighbours) you will come to it at last, if you do not take heed) I say, when it is come to a hight, then the Soul is (as it were) *becrusted*, *seated* ; it will not be discerned easily by such a Soul, that covetousness hath any harm in it at all ; Tis good husbandry, thriftiness. Men grow bold to *plead* for it, and for their neglect of duty, to do other things. See how bold *Martha* is. *Mary* was hearkning to Christ preaching ; *Martha* was cooking it, and dressing meat for Christs dinner ; Out cries *Martha* to Christ (you shall find it Luk. 10 40.) *Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me.* And if it be so in the green tree, how much more in the dry ? If good People under a temptation, be so bold to plead for their neglect of attending upon Christ, and to blame them that are more carefull, and strict then themselves ; how much more will such as are *swallowed up* (as it were) of the World be bold ? But you see in that place of *Luke*, what Christ the King of the Church doth. He falls a *chiding* of *Martha*, not of *Mary*. He tells her *Mary*

had

Time spent in Gods service is the best spent.

had chosen the good part. Worldly people say to the Almighty, *depart from us*; they hold it good wisdom, to labour and save while they be yong, that they may not live in want when they be old. It cannot be denied but this is good Wisdom in its place. But they are penny wise, and pound foolish, as it is said of the Widdows that *live in pleasure*, 1 Tim. 5. 6. they are *dead while they live*. For *what is a man profited if he winn the Whole World, and lose his own Soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his Soul?* Mat. 16. 26. I tell you for every hours coming to Sermons, spent in praier, thou shalt be rewarded; thou shalt have the comfort of it one day. Time spent in Gods service is the best spent time. When once you come to know the *terrors of the Lord*, you will not think any labour too great, to get news of a crucified Christ, nor all the wealth in the world to be compared to one Minutes Society with Jesus Christ. O my mouth is opened, my heart is enlarged. O what would a damned Soul in Hell give to come out of his condition? I am the more earnest, upon mine indignation at the abominable boldness of earthly-minded People. Tis well twas Christ himself spake, and that it was to *Martha*. If we should say but half so much to Christs pretended

*Galeaci-
us.*

Disciples now, we should hear of it again hot and whole (as our country folks phrase it) and they would tell us that if all should be of our minde, we should all quickly go a begging; and *our hair would grow through our hood.* We should have as good as we bring; Such is the boldness of covetous persons; Such is the conceit that People have of the harmlesness, yea or rather of the commendableness of worldliness; whereas indeed it is a vice full of *deadly poyson*, full of ignorance of God, of Atheisme, of Idolatry, Injustice, Oppression, and indeed of all iniquity: as will be more at large shewed in the uses of the Point, which now I come unto.

Use. I. And first, It serveth for *information*, that there is great danger in affecting worldly things. It is (saith the Doctine) a great occasion to make People set light by the means of Grace, holy & religious employments; and therefore it must needs be a very dangerous thing, for a man or woman to let his or her affections to run out after the world. *I Tim. 6. 9. 10. But they that will be rich, fall into temptation, and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtfull lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil, which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves*

selves thorow With many sorows. It is the ready way to restrain and keep back our affections from God, and good exercises; and a sign that men do not savor of religion, to let them runn out after the things of the World. Now the things of the World are (as John saith 1 John 2. 16.) the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life: that is, Voluptuousness, Covetousness, Ambition. Let me single out this Goliath to encounter it, and draw out the sword of the spirit, out of that sheath Prov. 11. 4. Riches profit not in the day of wrath. And Ezekiel 7. 19. They shall cast their silver in the streets, and their gold shall be removed: their Silver and their gold shall not be able to deliver them in the day of the Lords wrath: they shall not satisfie their Souls, neither fill their bowels, because it is the stumbling block of their iniquity. And so we might say of all the pomp of this World. Psal. 49 6. 17. When men die they shall carry nothing away: their glory shall not descend after them. And the forenamed Ezekiel 7. ver. 10. 11. Behold the day, behold it is come, the morning is gone forth, the red hath blossomed, Pride hath budded, Violence is risen up into a rod of Wickedness: none of them shall remain, nor of their multitude, nor of any of theirs, neither shall there be wailing for them. You have seen the danger both of

Use. 2.

Soul and body too. Come we to a second information, of the sinfullness of their sin, & the greatness of their abomination, that let their spirits run out after the world. They go quite contrary to God, that neglect his Sabbaths and Sanctuary. *Exod. 31. 15. Six dayes may work be done, but in the seventh is the Sabbath of rest, holy to the Lord: Whosoever doth any work in the Sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death.* And so *Jer. 17. 27.* But God threatens to kindle a fire, not to be quenched, to devour the places of such as will not hearken to *hallow* the Sabbath day. If men will not *hallow* Gods Sabbaths, nor reverence his Sanctuaries, but will be *cross* to God, God will be *cross* to them. They that cannot allow him his own day, because they are so drownd in the world, that they cannot *remember* it before it comes, much less *observ* it when it is come: God will lay great sin to their charge because it proceeds from undervaluing of him, through ignorance, & this hath much sinfullness in it. Therefore *Mat. 6. 33.* Christ wils to *seek first the kingdom of God*; because it is a very sinfull thing to prefer the world before God, & the things of his Kingdom. God and the very quintessence of the world stand in opposition *ex diametro*. The very *Wisdom of the flesh is enmity to God.* *Rom. 8. 7.* And thence is it that there is so much sinfullness

fulness in the love of the World, because the spirit and the soul do run out *excessively* after the World, and do take great delight in these carnal things. And when the Soul and affection runs out to take pleasure and delight in any thing more then in God, there is there much sinfulness.

There is in sin three thing considerable. The *baseness* of it, the *viciousness* of it, and the *sinfulness* of it. Now tis true, there is not so much baseness in this sin, as there is in some others; As to instance in Adultery, it is a sin that hath much baseness in it, it carrieth with it a *stain*, and a *blot* that *shal never be blotted out*. Yet this sin of worldliness, is a far greater sin; though it be not *majoris infamie*, of greater infamie; yet it is *Majoris culpe* of greater fault; there is far more irregularity in it. *Why then is it not so esteemed among men?* *Quest.*

I answer, Men do not use to judge of sin *Ans.* according to the rules of the Word, but according to the customes of men. And among men, it is meet, that sometimes sins, though of lesser fault in themselves, yet of more *mischievous consequence*, and more destructive to the peace and comfort of humane society, should be more severely punished, and so consequently the committers of it, more hooted at, and had in dishonour. And this

is the cause that Covetousness passeth so orderly and quietly, through the judgements of men, untill it come to *break out* into Robberies and violencies which are prejudicial to the peace of men living together in humane Society.

2.

Secondly, There is in some sins more *vitiousness*, then in other some; Sins that are against *Moral Vertues*, and *Natural Conscience*, do stare more Gastly someties, then greater sins against God do: Because a man that hath no Grace, hath yet a *Conscience*, which is a true rule according to its proportion; but is too short to measure sins by that are more *immediately* committed against God. So *Paul* when he was *Saul*, lived in *all good Conscience*, Acts 23.1. He saw not the greatness of the sin of *persecuting the Saints*. He thought he had done very well in dealing so cruelly as he did with the Church; there was not vitiousness in it, according to the Rules of *Morality*, nor the outward Rules men use to go by in measuring sin.

3.

Now by this time ye see, what I drive at; to wit, to shew you that though there be neither so much baseness or vitiousness in loving of the world, as in Adultery and some other sins: yet that it is a very high sin, and
strikes

strikes deep into Gods honour: And it is the more dangerous, by how much the less mens help against this evil is. If our Sermons will not deterre you from theevery, or robbery, or murther, or adultery; yet the Gallows may. There are *severe Laws* against these sins, and they are sins in the esteem of the world, and sins against *natural conscience*; and all is a help against these sins. But against those Maladies, to make light of Christ, of Gospel-Seasons, of blessed Ordinances; not to delight in God; to be glad when we have wealth, to put our trust in *Princes*; to be very pensive at the frowns and threats of men; not to put our trust in the *living God*, and the like; here wants mens *laws*, the worlds vote, and natural conscience to accuse. And yet these and such like sins are far greater, and have far more sinfulness in them, then those other forementioned sins of *infamy*: A man may go for an eminent Professour of Religion, and yet be worldly. To refuse Christ, or but to neglect the offer of grace, is more sinfull then fornication, yea then adultery. *Heb. 10.28,29.* will teach us, that such sinners are worthy of *sover punishment* incomparably then such as break, nay despise all *Moses Law*. If you have but your minde upon work, or upon the

M. Capel.

the world in a day of *worship*, it is a very great sin. And the Reason or ground of all this, is, because God is so every way furnished to do the creature good, and hath so *unbowelled* his heart in sending his Son, and so humbled himself to our capacity in ordaining Ordinances, and so cleared his truth and faithfulness in all Ages by making them *effectual*, and the like; and knows and considers all this to the utmost; So as that he cannot but most *severely* punish worldliness, refusing Church-communion, love of the creature and the like, as sins that are *beyond measure* sintull, by the Rule *Saints* go by, though not by the worlds rule.

And so I come to the Use of Counsell, and so shall end this Point of Doctrine.

I advise every good man to take care, that his worldly affairs be no hinderance to him in receiving Christ, or occasions of *disesteeming* Gods grace in the means thereof offered to him, after the fashion of worldly men that know not what it is in the way of mercy to enjoy an Ordinance and *Christ* in it, or to neglect it in a way of sin.

I will use some Motives.

Mot. I.

First we are naturally apt to follow bad examples; especially if they that give them be

be our *Fathers* or *Mothers*, or *Gentlemen*. *Regis ad exemplum, &c.*
And by the way look to it ye great stones, that draw so much rubbish out of those old walls after you; Your torments will be the greater for that by your *example* God hath been the more dishonoured.

But Secondly, If you will follow mens examples in *sinning*, you shall not be behinde in *punishment*. For God is righteous.

2.
Qui par-
viter pec-
cant pari-
ter punien-
tur.

And thirdly, all the comfort of a Christian depends upon Gods favour, which is ordi-
narily even fastened to his Ordinances. So that they that do mean to finde out the riddles of his love in Christ, must plow with the beisers of his Ordinances, prescribed in his Word.

3.

And that the light of Gods countenance, is the life of a Saint, you may see by David, *Psal. 46, 7. There be many that say, Who will shew us any good? Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us. Thou hast put gladness in my heart, more then in the time that their corn and wine increased.* And therefore that you may enjoy God, that ye may be on that *high Tower* from whence all men look like Crows, take heed that the World do not keep you, from doing those things that will make you to know him better, whom to know indeed is to be truly wise and safe.

But

Quest.

But how should a man prevent this mischief which others run into?

Ans.

By labouring to have the work of grace thoroughly wrought in your hearts. It is impossible mens hearts should run out after the world, when they have gotten grace. *Psal.* 17.15. *As for me, I shall behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness.* See what an odd man Paul is grown, *Phil.* 4.11,12. *Not that I speak in respect of want (saith he:); For I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound; everywhere and in all things I am instructed, both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. and ver. 17,18. Not because I desire a gift, &c. But I have all, and abound, and am full, &c. And (to conclude this Use and point of Doctrine, and to make an end of this 5. verse) read 1 Tim. 6.5,6,7,8. verses, They must be withdrawn from, that suppose gain is godliness, they are men of corrupt mindes and destitute of the truth. But godliness with contentment is great gain, &c. The Lions shall want and suffer hunger, but such as have made God their portion, and do hold fast by him, shall be happy as long as he is God. And that I hope will be long enough.*

But

But I come to speak of the behaviour of the latter sort, out of the 6. ver.

And the remnant took his servants, and intreated them spitefully, and slew them.

We are come from speaking of Hogs, to shew you the behaviour of Dogs: we have seen a bad behaviour in the former verse; but here is a far worse in this. The former sort of men did but slight the offer of Christ, and the means of grace; but these do maliciously oppose them.

In this behaviour of theirs, there is a threefold act, to be taken notice of.

1. They took them, that is apprehended them as gross Malefactors: *And the remnant took his servants.* So the Jews after Christ was ascended, laid hands on Peter and John, and on Stephen; and Acts 12. there you read that Peter is put in prison. Thus they took the servants.

2. They intreated them spitefully, saith the Text; that is, with scoffs, and scorns, and imprisonment, and whipping. Paul received of the Jews five times, 40 stripes save one, at a time, 2 Cor. 11. 24.

3. They slew them, that is, some of them were murdered by them, as Steven and James the brother of John: Wherein they declared their malice to the utmost. And this

The preaching of the Gospel persecuted.

this was implicitly foretold, *Matth* 10. 28. And fear not them which kill the body. And we see their spirit. *Acts* 22. 22. Away with them (cried those Jews of Paul) for it is not fit that he should live.

I shall out of this verse from all these particulars, handle but one Point of Doctrine.

Doct.

That the grace of God offered unto men in the preaching of the Gospel, hath not only such enemies as contemn it, but also such as carry themselves with all possible baseness and cruelty against the Messengers thereof.

This appears out of the 21 of *Matth*, ver. 35 to the 39. likewise *cap.* 23. ver. 34. to the 38. *cap.* 26 4. *Acts* 7. 52 to the 59. It is very evident, that such was the usage of the Servants of Christ in the time of the Jewish Church and Common wealth; Peter and the other Apostles whipt. *Acts* 5. Steven stoned, *Acts* 7. James slain with the sword, *Acts* 12. John banished into Patmos, *Rev.* 1. And the stories of the Church do shew what usage they have had since.

But what may be the reason hereof? Christ who sends is the Prince of peace, the Gospel is the Gospel of Peace, and the end eter-

nal

nal peace. What therefore should be the reason, Christ should have no better entertainment in the world? *The son of man came not to destroy but to save*; tis true; but yet men do either think that such as pretend to be *Messengers sent of God*, are not. but are wicked men, as the Jews did not stick to say of Christ himself, *Joh 8 48.* and they thought they said well. and *ver. 52.* they are very confident that he had a Divil: And *Joh. 10. 53.* they pretend they did not find fault with him for any thing but *blasphemy*, or else they think that they are their enemies, because in declaring the grace of God, they declare their duties, or rather their properties that are partakers of it. *Tit. 2. 11. 12.* For the grace of God that bringeth Salvation, hath appeared unto all men, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present evil world. But this wicked men cannot abide to be told, because they cannot choose but know that they are not such as they are to whom Christ appeareth in power. And because their sins and they are one, like *Hippocrates Twins*, born together, live together, and die together; he that toucheth their sin, toucheth the apple of their eye. They and their sins do mean to run their fortunes together.

gether. Now we tell you, as the *truth* is, that they that take Christ to be their *Priest*, must and shall take him to be their *King* to rule them, and their *Prophet* to instruct them. Now men think we are too *strict*, unreasonable; that we abuse them; and they will not be souled by us; But, Friends, we must tell you the *truth*, and we have the best Preacher that ever was, for our example, *John 8.44. Ye are of your Father the Devil, &c.* VVe must be plain; if you will not love the children of God, if you will not make much of them that *fear* the Lord; if vile persons in your eyes be not *contemned*, if you do not hate the congregation of the wicked; if you love to sit with *vain* persons; if you set not up God in your *families*: if you be cozeners, oppressors, prophane; if you *neglect* the Kingdom of God, and the ways of the Lord Jesus, and the Ordinances which are prescribed by the Lord, to wit, Sacraments, and the ways of worship, &c. you must know that it is not *we* that make the breach, but *your selves*, because ye are in the *Gall of bitterness*, and in the bonds of *iniquity*, as *Peter* told *Simon Magus*, *Acts 8. 23.*

Use 1.

And therefore (for the first *Use*) they are deceived that think otherwise. *John Baptist*

tist was a famous Preacher, he spake plainly, he calls them *a generation of vipers*; he plainly rebukes *Herod*, *Mark* 6. 16. to the 20 verse. Therefore *Herodias* had a quarrel against him, and would have killed him, as after she prevailed to have it done. Yet mans deceitfull heart makes himself stark blind, it is *deceitfull above all things*. O, if the *Jews* had lived when their Fathers did, they would have been loth to have *killed the Prophets*; but yet they thought it no sin to put *Christ* to death. Ye cannot think what hearts ye have, if God do but leave you to your selves. You have all of you the *seeds* of all sin, even of the vilest abominations. Christ only hath this priviledge, that the *Prince* of this World coming found nought in him; both because of his *freedom* from Original corruption, and that *special* sup-
portation that he had from God.

But secondly, It sheweth the greatness of their sin, that are come to this height, to *abuse* them that intreat them to be *reconciled* unto God. This is our Work, *2 Cor.* 5. 19, 20. And what your work hath been, the Sun can witness. But yet it is (though to you a *sign of perdition*) to us a *token* that we are right, and do our duty, because we finde such entertainment from ungodly men among us; as

The Preaching of the Gospel persecuted.

(I profess) I know not one man that hath the least testimony or *signe* of grace, that hath opposed us. But these dirty ways you make us to trot through, though they be somewhat irksom to us as we are *men*: yet are they comfortable because we *know* by the dirtiness of them, that we are in our way: for, *all that will live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution.*

Use 3.

Yet God forbid, that I should *cease* praying for you, or give over advising you. I will sow the precious seed of counsell *once more*; who can tell whether the Lord will leave a blessing behind? O take heed ye be not in the number of them that *deal cruelly* with the Messengers of Gods grace, that deal despightfully with those that bring the gospel of salvation. For our parts, we live in the *upper* region, we are above ye, we are upon such an *high Tower* as makes ye all look like *crows* in our eyes, though ye were bigger then ye be. For he that can make his *calling and election* sure, if he have to do with the greatest *Nimrods* in the world, he need not fear: *his strength shall be the munition of rocks &c.* But I advise you for your own sakes, and your poor families, whom you would be loth should be Vagabonds. and *beg their bread* (as I have known the children of some

some opposers and persecutors to do, that had as big looks one day as any of you) as, I say, you would be loth the *curse* of God should light on you and yours: take heed of touching these *apples of Gods eye*: I say (as *Pilates* wife said to her husband) *Matth. 27. Have nothing to do with these men.* Ye were better anger all the *Witches* in the *World*: O take heed how ye *force* the *Church* to fall to their (*desperate*) prayers, and to set God upon some notable Work for his *great* glory, in your *remarkable* destruction. But rather come bow, come repent, give over; There is *forgiveness* with God. He will forgive *all* that is past; he can forgive any sin that is *repented* of, and will. I know it is harder to *raise* up a soul loaden with sin, then to *load* it; therefore I am earnest to perswade you not to be discouraged, or troubled, that you *have been* so wicked (as *Joseph* comforted his brethren, *Gen. 45. 5. cap. 50. 19, 20, 21.*) So would I willingly encourage you to come and *kiss the Son*, who is willing to fall on your neck and kiss you. As the *Jaylor* (*Acts 16. 33.*) *washed* those stripes which he had made, and was a *Disciple*; So come and *rejoyce* in those ways ye have evil spoken of; love those *Preachers* ye have so basely used, and so despihtfully handled.

What shall I say?

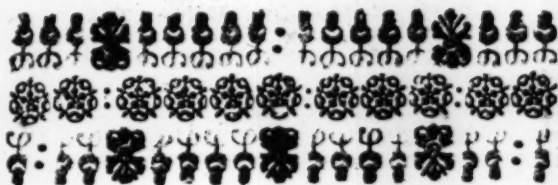
Mot. 1. First, God takes notice of this sin.

2. Secondly, he will be greatly offended for it.

3. Thirdly, he will severely punish it.

All which particulars are contained in the verse immediatly following this; and shall be spoken of (God willing) some other time.


The



The Sixth Sermon.

Matth. 22. ver. 7.

But when the King heard thereof, he was wroth, and he sent forth his Armies, and destroyed those Mur-therers, and burnt up their City.

 Ou remember (I hope) how far we have gone in this parable; for my purpose is not to repeat, but to go on with this 7. ver. which contains in it, summarily, the issue & consequent of their cruel dealing to-wards

wards the Kings Servants (of which ye heard out of the foregoing *vers.*) Wherein (for our more methodical proceeding) I will consider,

First, Gods taking notice of this their sin, in these words, *But when the King heard thereof.*

Secondly, His displeasure against it, in the next words: *he was wroth.*

Thirdly, The effect of his displeasure in their severe punishment, in all the other words, *And he sent forth his Armies, and destroyed those Murtherers, and burnt up their City.*

In which last particular, there are three things, contained, all worthy observation.

First. The Instrument or means whereby they are punished, *viz. Armies.*

Secondly, the nature or quality of the Offence, *Murtherers*; they are arraigned for *Murther.*

Thirdly. The severity of the punishment, *they are destroyed, and their City is burnt up.*

For the first, *when the King heard thereof*, that is, when Almighty God declared himself to take notice of this their wickedness; for it is spoken to our capacity, by a Metaphor

phortaken from a King that hath sent Messengers in love, and hears news that they have been *abused*.

We have a notable History in the second book of *Samuel*, chap. 10. *David* was willing to shew kindness unto *Hannun* the Son of *Nahash*, and sent his servants to comfort him, concerning the death of his Father: Which (as you shall find in that place) were *vilainously* dealt withall; and then *ver. 5.* we have these words, *when they told it unto David.* Thus the Lord is made out under these words, *and when the King heard thereof*, as taking notice of the cruel usage of his Servants in the *World*. And such expressions we have many in Scripture. As for instance, *Gen. 18. ver. 20. 21.* *And the Lord said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous: I will go down now, and see whither they have done altogether according to the cry of it which is come unto me; and if not, I will know.* I observe this Doctrine,

That, *cruel or unworthy dealing against the Doct. Ministers of the Gospel is a sin that God takes special notice of.*

And the reason is because it is a capital sin,

God takes notice of the cruel usage

it is an abuse of Gods Grace in a *high* degree. It is (as we may call it) God-Murther, and Christ-Murther, as well as soul-Murther, &c. (of which more shall be said when we come to it.) But in the mean time consider, Wherein can *Mortal* man do greater despight to the *Majesty* of God, then to oppose his Grace and favour offered in the *means* of Salvation? And therefore, we have a remarkable expression *Luk. 3. 19. 20.* But *Herod* the Tetrach, being reproved by (*John*) for *Herodias* his brother *Philips* wife, and for all the evils that *Herod* had done, *added this above all, that he shut up John in Prison.* Mark (I pray) many evils are laid to his charge, but this is added above all the rest, as a more *crying* sin then all his other sins, *That he shut up John in Prison.* It is a sin that cannot be *hid*, a sin that God takes *special* notice of.

Learn therefore for the first use, that mens wickedness in this kind (though scarce looked upon as a sin) is yet a very great one.

- Use.* I. As first for the sin of depriving them of their livelihood. 1 Cor. 9.9.10- *To muzzle the mouth of the Oxe that treadeth out the corn;* This is a crying sin: *For if the cry of the labourers hire that reapeth down your corn crieth*

crieth so loud, as to enter into the ears of the Lord of Sabbath: how much more will this Preacher-starving sin? And by the way, I must tell you, this is shamelessly practised in this very place. There is not a penny that comes out of your purses, ye are even almshouses in this kind; other places must maintain you a Preacher, and you intrusted only to gather it up; and yet that wickedly (blush O Heavens?) is detained; for no other cause, but because ye are plainly, for your good dealt withall. Because you, and your Pride, Knavery, Folly, Covetousness, are found fault withall (which all the Country stinks of) therefore you will add this to all your other wickednesses, to detain that which ye are only entrusted to receive, and pay. Is it not enough that ye have embezzled the stock of the poor artificers, which was given in by your charitable Ancestors: and carelessly (like fools) set out the yearly renewals of the town to such as either cannot or will not pay the rent, wherewith the Schoolmaster should be paid: but that ye suffer men very well able to pay rent for houses, to dwell in houses of Charity, and to suffer some of them to run to ruine; that now in your last enfeoffing the town-Land, ye have conspired against the Church, and
all

all the Members of it, that not one of them should be made privy to your proceedings, nor the father of any one that Communicates with the Church, (though every way more sufficient in estate and far greater payers to all paiments, then ye your selves) That ye nick-name the People of God a rigid faction ; the like unheard of abominations, (which a modest man may blush to speak of, though you do not to practice them :) I say is not all this enough, but ye must detain that which others have cared for the procuring of, and which neither is, nor never was yours ? O consider this ye Monsters, lest some monstrous judgement befall you. And as this is a sin that God hears, that is, takes notice of ; So also all your affronts, and scoffs, and provocations, especially your fitting your tickets and libells of contention and strife to be read on Lords days, and usually on such of them as the Church use to receive the Lords supper upon, that you may fill up the measure of your sin ; and God pour on you and yours the Vials of his wrath, which most certainly he will do, if repentance prevent not.

Use. 2.

Here is in the next place a comfort to Gospel-Preacher ; God (who is able to right them) takes notice of their wrongs. And this

this should keep up their Spirits in the midst of all their barbarous usages.

O take heed, all of you that hear me this Use. 3. day, (and this shall be my last use of this point) take heed, I say, of this sin, be not injurious to the Ministers of the Gospel; God takes notice of it, and will severely punish it: which is the second thing in the *vers.* and comes next to be handled.

He was wroth. And without any more The 2. particular.
do it affords us this Doctrine.

*That base usage of the Messengers of God, Doct.
&c. is a sin that greatly provokes Gods
wrath.*

Read the *chap.* before this, the one and twentieth, *ver.* 35. to the 42. You have their sin in all the *verses*, except the last which is the one and fortieth: and in that, the miserable effects of Gods wrath are foretold. He will miserably destroy those wicked men. Which came to pass sure enough, not long after.

Now the Reason hereof, is, because God Reason.
favours no sin. All sin is contrary to his holy nature, and righteous Laws; and tends to the destruction of his creature: but this above any other sin whatsoever, is displeasing to God: for First,

1.

First, It is a crushing of Gods grace, so far as a man can. It is a God-killing sin. And if it be a sin to kill a man; what is it to go about to kill God? The grace of God, is the most glorious thing in the world. Was there ever such love heard of? *That God should not spare his own son, but give him to death for us;* admirable love! And here is unparaliel'd justice too; the Son though the Son, must die that justice may be satisfied. And wisdom able to make all the wise men of the world quite mad, so much as once to look upon it. And much might be said of the glory of the Gospel, the glory of God in the face of Jesus-Christ. And therefore to go about to hinder this design of God for his glory, is a provoking sin, and brings down great wrath.

2.

And then Secondly, Opposing Gospel-Preachers, tends to the destruction of thousands eternally. If we call them bloody men, which spoyl, and kill, and have no mercy, which cast into Prison, as many of our poor neighbours were by cursed Cavaliers into *Lidford* Castle and the Town hall here, where they starved divers of them. I say, how much more are they bloody butchers among you that go about to hinder your Salvation, and to keep you in such a condition as will be for

for the everlasting destruction both of body and soul!

Friends, I fear the blood of those that starv'd in this Town in the late troubles, will be laid to the charge of some of you, that did not pittie them nor relieve them; but rather rejoyced in their misery (as many of you did) and helped to make it greater. O do not add to body-killing soul-killing; do not add to man-killing God-killing, Christ-killing.

But be informed, that though a few vain men among you are such Grace-enemies, *Use 1.* and are countenanced by such of you as should have more wit, and should improve your eminencies to better purpose; and will, when ye have *tasted the Lord is gracious*; yet the righteous God likes it not.

And secondly, wo to the guilty. It were *Use 2.* better to provoke all the men in the World then God to wrath, as all abusers of Ministers do.

And that I may end this point also let *Use 3.* me perswade you, do so no more (good people) you provoke the heavenly King to wrath; and this will turn to the shame and confusion of your own faces; yea, to your utter destruction if you go on. O if God should once say, and swear; forasmuch as I have

have been stifled and strangled by you so long; and my rich offer so trampled on in the dirt of your pride and prophaneſs, paſſion and worldlineſs; you ſhall be troubled no more; it would be ſad news.

And ſo I come to the ſevere puniſhment of this ſin, and therein firſt of the inſtrument which God makes uſe of, and the means whereby he puniſheth ungodly men: *He ſent forth his Armies.* The nature and quality of the offence, and the ſeverity of the puniſhment it ſelf, ſhall be ſpoken of (God willing) afterward.

But firſt (I ſay) of the Inſtrument or means. I am almoſt out of doubt that the holy-Ghoſt here hath an eye to the *Roman Armies* which came and beſieged *Jeruſalem*, by Gods appointment and ſending, even to the utter deſtruction of that City: but yet I will enlarge ſomewhat upon this Doctrin.

Doct.

That God hath armies to execute vengeance upon his ungodly adverſaries, that ſet themſelves againſt his Ordinances, and the Miniſters and obſervers of them.

I add that (the obſervers of them) be-
 cauſe uſually wicked men joyn them toge-
 ther

ther in their opposing them, as *Saul made havock of the Church, Acts 8. 2.* and haled not only Preachers, but other men, yea, and women to Prison. I confess, through the mighty power of God, *Curst Kine have short horns* among us: but yet what may be done, and what the times will permit to be done, is extended to the very utmost even against all that are of this way, both old and young. Now seeing it is so, let us mul-
 lter up the Lords Forces, that they may be terrible to you, that by repentance, the coming of them may be prevented.

That God hath many Armies, we may easily demonstrate from the variety of his creatures, which are many hosts; and from whence it cometh to pass that he is sometimes called the Lord of hosts, as *Psal. 84. 1, 8, 12.* In all which verses he is so called. The several sorts of Hosts or Armies we will shew you.

First Angels, some whereof are good, some are bad. *2 Sam. 24. 16. An Angel stretched out his hand upon Jerusalem to destroy it, to wit, by the plague. 2 Kings 19. 35. An Angel of the Lord smote in the camp of the Assyrians, an hundred fourscore and five thousand.* These are called a heavenly host. *Luke 2. 13. And suddenly there was*
 With

With the (or that) Angel (that brought to the shepherds the news of Christs birth) a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying &c. Acts 12.23. And immediatly the Angel of the Lord smote him (that is, King Herod) because he gave not God the Glory, and he was eaten of Worms, and gave up the Ghost.

2.

2. Sometimes the Lord makes use of the Sun, Moon, and Stars, and this is another sort of Army the Lord makes use of: these are called the hoast of heaven, Deut. 17.3. Now Hoast is the same with Army.

We finde the Lord making use of this hoast, Joshua 10.12,13. And he (to wit Joshua) said in the sight of Israel, Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon, and thou Moon in the valley of Ajalon. And the Sun stood still, and the Moon staid, &c.

3.

Thirdly, he hath his Armies of men. Exod. 12.51. The Lord did bring the children of Israel out of Egypt by their Armies. Yea even evil men, wicked men are Armies that God sometimes makes use of. Isaiah 10.5. 6,7. O Assyrian the rod of mine anger, and the staff in their hand is mine indignation. I will send him against an hypocritical Nation; and against the people of my Wrath will I give him a charge to take the spoil, and to take the prey,
and

and to tread them down like the mire of the streets. How be it he meaneth not so, &c. And to Jer. 25 9. Behold, I will send and take all the families of the North, saith the Lord, and Nebuchadnezzar my servant, &c. Thus ye see the Armies of men good and bad are all the Lords,

Fourthly, The Lord hath his Armies of water. Gen. 6 17. The Lord prepares waters to drown the whole World for the wickedness of it. And Exod. 14. 27. 28. The Lord overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the Sea. And the Waters returned and covered the Charets and horsemen, and all the host of Pharaoh. &c. So, Judges 5. 21. sings Deborah and Barak. The river Kishon swept them away, that Ancient River, the River Kishon.

4.

Fifthly, The Lord hath an Army of fire Gen. 19. 24. Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorra, brimstone and fire from the Lord out of Heaven. So 2 Kings 1. 10. Eliab is sent for, but fire comes down from Heaven, and consumes that Captaine and his fifty men that were sent to take him; and another in like manner, and his fifty, ver. 11.

5.

Sometimes the ayr is employed as Gods Army to let flie its arrows of the pestilence.

6.

K

Numb.

*Numb. 16. 46. Or of hailstones as Joshua.
10. ver. 11.*

7. Seventhly, the Lord hath the Earth also to make use of for the destruction of his Enemies. *Numb. 16. 32. The earth opens her mouth to swallow up Korah, Dathan and Abiram.*

8. Yea even the meanest creatures, Lice, Frogs,
9. Worms the Lord hath to fight against Pha-
10. raoh, and Herod. *Exod. 8. 6. 8. 16. 17. and
Acts 12. 23.*

11. Lastly, the Lord doth sometimes make a mans own Conscience a terrible Army against himself. O when God shall fight against a man with terrors of Conscience, he will be weary of his life, as Judas was. *Mat. 27. 3. 4. 5.* These Armies are all at a minutes Call; when God doth but say the word, they go.

Use. 1. Now for the first use, learn we hence, that God wants not power to punish his adversaries. Did folk consider Gods Armies, they would not dare to go on in sin. Men foolishly think earthly powers are above the powers of the Almighty. This is a great sin against the first Commandment. Yet is it common that men fear earthly powers, and fear not God who is the Lord of Hosts; and in comparison of whom, all the Nations are as the drop of a bucket.

I will declare in the next place, in the name of the Lord of Hosts, a woe to all those that are adversaries to this heavenly King God Almighty. He hath Armies to execute vengeance upon his Adversaries. Surely they are not like to escape his wrath : There is no fleeing from Gods Armies, nor from his presence, *who is himself a consuming fire.* *Whither shall I go (saith David) from thy presence ?* Psal. 139. Use. 2.

Thirdly, Stand in awe of the Almighty, Use. 3. be carefull not to displease him : he is a great General, he hath many Armies, as you have heard. Men of power are feared, how much more ought God ?

But how may a man know, whether he fear God or no ? Quest.

Answer. By his diligent departing from evil, and constant cleaving to that which is good. Psal. 24. 11. 12. 13. 14. *Come ye children, hearken unto me : I will teach you the fear of the Lord. What man is he that desireth life, and loveth many dayes, that he may see good ? Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile, depart from evil, and do good, seek peace & pursue it.* Pro. 8. 13. *The fear of the Lord is to hate evil: pride and arrogancy, & the evil way, & the froward mouth do I hate.* Answer.

And so I come to shew you the nature of

the sin, that is here laid to the charge of Gospel-oppoſers, and neglectors, that you may ſee the greatneſs of it, and the more abhor it.

- I. Murder is laid to the charge of the Jews. They were guilty of murder many ways.

Minister
Mur-
ther.

Fiſt, In that they murdered Gods Meſſengers. Now this again is done,

Fiſt, By taking away their lives. So Stephen was murdered. *Acts. 7. 58. 59.* So in Queen Maries dayes, *Cranmer, Ridley, Latimer, Philpot, Bradford, Saunders, Rogers, Julius Palmer,* were cruelly burned, becauſe they witneſſed for Chriſt.

Secondly, Gods Meſſengers are ſometimes Murthered, in their good name, and in their reputation. *He that ſhall ſay to his brother, Raca, Mat. 5. 22.* is in Gods account a Murderer. We know our times are in Gods hands; and our reputation riſeth and falleth, even as the Lord will: Yet thoſe evil tongues that ſpeak ſuch devouring words of us, are murtherous tongues before the Lord.

And ſo alſo Thirdly, When people are cauſeleſſy angry with any, much more with Miniſters, and ſwell in their pride and paſſion, *Mat. 5. 22.* aforenamed, the former part of the verſe.

Laſtly,

Lastly, To detain from them, that where-upon they and their families should live. It is a sin to withhold goods from the owners, though there be power in mens hands so to do. But blessed be God, who hath granted us meat to eat some other way, and wherewith to live. Yet give me leave to tell you, that sit here before me, and are guilty of this crying sin, that you must answer for it before that God whom we serve.

The second sort of Murder, is, Soul murder, I mean of their neighbours; All that oppose the wayes of God, do by consequence make themselves guilty of their blood that perish in their sins. They shall perish, but their blood shall be required, (as at the hands of careles Ministers, so) at your hands, that either neglect to do your best to procure Preachers; or (which is far worse) oppose them that God hath sent among you.

Thirdly, Ye are guilty of self-murder, in regard of your poor souls: And for a man to be found in this sence *felo de se*, will procure a sentence not only to be cast out, to a dog-like burial in the high way, but to be cast into outer darkness, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Fourthly, Such will be found Murderers

of Christ also. *Heb. 10. 29.* They tread underfoot the son of God, &c. they are guilty of the blood of the Lord Christ, they do in effect shed it again, that do refuse this crucified Christ offered in the Preaching of the Gospel.

God-
mur-
ther.

Lastly, Such as oppose Gospel-Ordinances, fight against God, the Author of this rich vouchsafement, and resist the life of God, what in them lieth ; We have an expression from the mouth of *Gamaliel*, recorded *Acts 5. 39.* of fighters against God : But I lay to the charge of all that do not readily and thankfully accept of Gods offer, but oppose his Ordinances, no less crime then murdering of God. Such as are strangers from the life of God, as stifle the life of God, which is his truth, O that they would consider. God speaketh to us, yea intreateth us, that we would be saved ; but we withstand God, we resist the Holy Ghost. *Act. 7. 51.* Learn therefore,

Dost:

That Cruelty, yea though but neglect, against or of the means of Grace, is in Gods account, and in Scripture language Murder.

And therefore great is their sin, that
Use. I. are any way guilty hereof. Murder is a heinous sin. Surely there be many Murderers,
 in

in all the forementioned particulars, that to the utmost of their power, indeavour Minister-murder, Soul-murder, Self-murder, Christ-murder, and God-murder.

And let such know that they have a fearful account, to make before God; for, Murder is a hainous sin. Use. 2.

Tak ye all heed, how ye oppose, or but slight preaching, under any pretence whatsoever. Ye are guilty of Murder, if ye do; and must dy for it. Use. 3.

The severity of the punishment it self, is the last particular. *He destroyed those Murderers, and burnt up their City.* This is the Doctrine,

That the base usage of faithfull Preachers, and despising Ordinances, shall be severely punished.

Doct.
III.

I shall referr you to what hath been said, and proved, and especially to *Luk. 19. 43. 44. & also to Mat. 10. 14. 15.* where the Lord Christ threatneth to such as shall refuse to hear the words of his Messengers, *that it shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgement, then for that City.* And also you may read *Mat. 23. 34. 35. 36.* You have the practice of evil men *ver. 34. to kill,*
K 4 scourge,

Scourge, persecute those Prophets, wise men and Scribes which God sends: And after the threatned accusation, or enditement, forerunning the severity of Gods justice, most certainly to be executed.

Reason.

It must needs be so; for it is the very hight of rebellion, the highest treason against God.

Use. 1.

O how hath the Diuel bewitched men, to make them think that they shall not smart for this sin.

2.

Woe to all those that are guilty, the curse of God hangs over their heads: the sentence of Gods judgement is gone out against them.

3.

Lastly, Would ye escape this severe vengeance of Almighty God? O take heed that ye be not cruel against the Ministers of the Gospel, nor careless of the Means of grace.

Take a Motive, Severe punishment from man is terrible; what then (think ye) will the severity of God be? *when a fire [shall] be kindled in [his] anger, and shall burn unto the lowest hell, and shall consume the earth with her increase, and set on fire the foundations of the Mountains.* I will conclude with *Heb. 12. 29.* *For our God is a consuming fire.* So much for the offer of Christ to the Jews. And so much for this time. Let us pray.

The



The seventh Sermon.

Matth. 22. *ver.* 8. unto the 15.

*Then saith he to his servants, The Wedding is ready, but they which were hid-
den were not worthy. Go ye therefore
into the high ways, and as many as ye
shall finde bid to the Marriage. So
these servants went out, &c.*

Hitherto of the Invitation of the *Jews*,
&c.

Now followeth to be considered the Cal-
ling of the Gentiles.

In which we
may consider

1. *The Kings Commission,*
ver. 8 9.
- 2 *The servants diligence in*
the execution thereof, v. 10.
3. *The Trial. Proof, and*
Punishment of unworthy
Guests, ver. 11, &c.

1. As touching the Kings
Commission we have

1. *The occasion, ver. 8.*
2. *The matter of the*
Commission, ver. 9.

The

Mans unworthiness deprives him of good.

The occasion was the readines of that admirable Wedding Supper, and the unworthines of the invited *Jews* to taste thereof; from both which I collect this Doctrine.

Doct.

Not any defect in God or his Son Christ, but mans own unworthiness deprives him of good.

There is here no defect in God; Christ is given to death, the Fathers Justice is satisfied, he hath by his one oblation of himself once offered, made a full, perfect, and sufficient oblation and satisfaction, for the sins of the whole world. The Wedding truly is ready; *Though your sins be as crimson (saith God) I will make them as white as snow.* If there were ten thousand times more sins, and wicked persons then there be; yet the Wedding is ready; nothing can hinder from mercy, such as are willing to accept of it. *O Judas*, thou didst commit a very great sin in betraying thy Master; but a far greater in running from him, and hanging thy self. The former was to make his Manhood cease to be, the latter was as it were a nulling of his Godhead, a very murder as it were of Christs Deity. *Mary Magdalen* was a woman out of whom went seven Devils, a sinner in the worst

worst sense ; yet there was not a more holy woman living afterward. She came to Christ, much was forgiven her ; there's enough in God, enough in Christ. Not any want of will in God. *As I live saith the Lord, I do not desire the death of a sinner.* Not any want in Christ, for he paid enough for a thousand worlds. *But they which were bidden, were not worthy.* Mans unworthiness deprives him of good. Why did the Apostle turn from the *Jews* to the *Gentiles*, but because they did put the Gospel from them, and did judge themselves unworthy of everlasting life? *Acts 13. 46.* they were wanting to themselves; the Supper was ready they were sent for, they would not come. What was that which turned *Adam* out of Paradise? His own unworthiness. He had one easie Commandment given him ; but he hearkened to the Serpent, and forgot God his Creator, *Gen. 3.* What was that drowned the old world, but sin, disobedience? they hearkened not to *Noah* sent for their good; Gods long-suffering waited in his Ministry and preaching; they were unworthy ; they are now prisoners in Hell for their labour. Read *1 Pt. 3. 19, 20.* This unworthiness made the earth to swallow up *Corah, Dathan, and Abiram*; they rose up against *Moses* and *Aaron*, which
were

Mans unworthiness deprives him of good.

were Gods Servants, they wanted for nothing (as we use to say) but they would not be ruled, *Numb. 16.* there you have their story. This unworthiness in King *Saul* lost him his Kingdom; *Samuel* was sent to him with a Message from God; he did not punctually observe it. See *1 Sam. 15. 23.* what is there said, *Rebellion is the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry: Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being King.* Mens unworthiness is the common cause of all calamities. Health, wealth, the Gospel, it is unworthiness of them deprives you, robs you of them all.

Use 1.

If this Doctrine be true, if not any defect in God, or want in the merits of Christ, but unworthiness be the cause of rejection; if our sins be the cause of all our sorrows we lie under; then God is not to be blamed, when we are deprived of his benefits; men may thank themselves for misery in any kinde. Friends, you should never live one sad hour more, if you would accept of *Christ*, if you would be ruled by God. Tis true, *Joseph* was in prison, yea, but God was with him. What care I (may a Saint say) where I am, whether in a Palace or a Prison, if God be with me.

Surely

Surely, this use may be made good upon this Reason; God is rich in mercy, and of a liberal disposition to bestow his grace and good things; therefore saith *Isaiah* (cap. 59. 1, 2, 3. *Behold the Lords hand is not shortned, that it cannot save; neither is his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear, &c.* Reason.

It shews also the greatness of mans sin, that will not open his mouth to be filled though God bid him to open it wide, and hath promised to fill it. *Unto us a child is born, and unto us a son is given*: Here is a Christ offered to you all to save you from your sins. O what a sin is this, men will not thankfully accept of Gods offers! 2.

Consider. 1. This provokes the Lord wonderfully, it moves him to take away his offers. *Consid.* 1.

2. It is a greater sin to refuse Christ, then to break all the ten Commandments. *He that believeth not shall be damned, Mar. 16. 16. If any man love not the Lord Jesus, let him be Anathema Maranatha. 1 Cor. 16. 22. Let him be cursed, and cursed over and above: This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, Joh. 3. 19.* 2.

3. Men

3. Men sin against themselves; they rob themselves, undo themselves, cast themselves away; this is a sin of a high nature, it is a sin against nature. Men bring misery upon themselves through their foolishness. Beasts that we are! to deprive our selves of the means of grace, of the fruit and benefit of them, of health, friends, wealth, every thing! Christ hath provided all things; O what pity tis so much good chear should be lost! Surely it is a very sinfull sin so to forsake our own mercies, and to be guilty of our own misery.

Next for Counsell. Seeing there is no defect in God or Christ; seeing mans own unworthines deprives him of good; are you loth to be deprived of Gods benefits? be carefull to walk worthy of the Lord, unto all pleasing, *being fruitfull in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God*, Col. 1.10. Otherwise we may be justly deprived of good.

2. But what is it to walk worthy of the Lord?

It is for a man to improve to Gods glory, and to the good of his own soul, all those vouchsafements and enjoyments, which the Lord hath bestowed upon him. Say thus, God hath given me wealth; I will use my wealth

to

to his glory : the Lord hath given me opportunities of grace, I will improve them to the utmost. The talents which God hath given us, we must imploy them, trade upon them; we must not wrap them in a napkin; Have we riches, honours, children, lands, large possessions, any thing : Let us improve all to Gods glory ; let God be first in our thoughts, let us exalt him in all things. Servants, Children, Housholders, Parents, Constables, Magistrates, use your Talents, your Relations : improve your Interests to the glory of God, this is to walk worthy of the Lord. And this is the way, or rather a sign, that God hath been, will be, and continue to be your God unto death.

We come to the matter of the Commission. *Go ye therefore into the high ways, and as many as ye shall finde bid to the Marriage.* Ver. 9. In which words we may observe 1. The ground and occasion hinted, *Therefore* 2. The word of command *go ye*. 3. The place whither they must go, *viz. into the high ways*. 4. The work to be done. *As many as ye find, bid to the Marriage.*

From the first (besides what hath been said already) we may learn this Lesson.

The

Doct. The refusal of some is an occasion of the offer of grace to other some.

So *Acts 13. 46 47.* The refusal of the Gospel by the *Jews* is an occasion of the offer of it to the *Gentiles*. So *Rom. 11. 11.* *Through the fall of the Jews, Salvation is come to the Gentiles; if one will not, another shall.*

Reason. For God will have his full number whom he hath chosen to life, to be called, in spite of all opposition. Yea, to see a People, given up to obstinacy, and hardness of heart, is but to see Gods punishment on such, to make way for the calling of others. The Lord will not have his Gospel to be preached in vain; if the *Jews* reject it, the Lord will incline the hearts of the *Gentiles* thankfully to embrace it. *Acts 13 48.* And when the *Gentiles* heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord; and as many as were ordained to eternal life, believed. And so also *Rom. 11. 25.* *Blindness is hapned to Israel, untill the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. Therefore go ye out,*

Use 1. &c.

Then we may learn for our instruction,
That the coming and going of the offers of
grace

grace , is not limited or disposed according to mens wills , but according to the minde of the Lord. If men seek never so much to stop the current, they labour in vain. God alone doth all in this as in other things. If Gods elect be but few or none in one place, they be the more in another: If the word want good success in this town, it will find better in the next. And yet let such places take heed as will not receive the Gospel, as will not hear our words. It shall be more tolerable for such as never enjoyed the word; *It shall be easier for the Land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgement, then for those places.* Read *Mat. 10. 14 15.* It is a monstrous absurdity , to think that the removal of Ministers is in the power of two or three addle-headed fools. Surely it is a business of a higher concernment then so. *Davids times were in Gods hands, and so are the times of all ; and therefore no question Gospel preachers go and come by Gods special will.*

Next we may learn that the Lord is able *Use. 2.* to bring good out of evil, which may comfort Gods servants. They that profit not by the means offered, shall smart for it , as the *Jews* do even to this very day. But yet God will bring good out of it. This considera-

L

tion

tion is of great use. we will a little look into it. All the creatuets both in heaven and earth, act, go, and come at Gods command. When we see men bold in their opposing the wayes of God, we many times are troubled; we do not consider, that as in wisdom he made all things, so in wisdom he ordereth all things excellently. *Gen. 45. ver. 3. 7. 8.* saith Joseph there, *God did send me before you to preserve life, &c.* And *Gen. 50. 20.* But as for you ye thought evil against me, but God meant it unto good, to bring it to pass, as it is this day, to save much People alive. And so for lusts, and temptations, God suffers them sometimes in his own children; either to teach us to observe his rules better; or to humble us, that we may cleave closer to God, and that graces may grow (Humility) saith one) is the Nurse of graces) or that we may know God, and our selves better, or that we may be the more thankfull when victory comes: but yet all this while God is bringing good out of it: and that Oracle (worthy to be remembred) *that all things shall work together for good to them that fear God. &c. Rom. 8. 28.* will be found in the end to be gloriously true.

Use 3.

Therefore let us learn to take notice of the power, wisdom and goodness of God, that

that can and doth thus bring good out of evil, good effects out of evil causes.

This will confirm us in the truth of Gods *Mot.* 1. goodness and other attributes.

And Secondly, It will teach us in evill times. instead of murmuring to bless God for his providences, and goodness and power in (thus) converting of evil to good. 2.

And Lastly, It will make us to walk confidently and to lie down confidently, and to put our trust in God, and in nothing to be carefull. Though we meet with afflictions, yet we shall not be much troubled, because we shall by taking notice perceive that these are to nurture us. *Deut.* 8. 2. 5. that we may learn to know him better, and to know our selves. Therefore it is good (I say) to take notice of Gods dealing in this kind. So much for this point. 3.

From the word of command. *Go ye*, we may learn,

That Christians must do Warrantable Doct. actions.

They must have a care to do what they have a word of command for; at least, what is neither directly nor indirectly forbidden

in the word of God. For there are some actions which are called indifferent, as 1 Cor. 7. 28. 30. *If thou marry, thou hast not sinned, &c. and to weep as though we wept not, and to rejoyce as though we rejoyced not.* Such things are not a transgression of a Law. (for so sin is 1 Jo. 3. 4) they are indifferent in themselves; Though every particular determined thought word or action be either good or bad, a step either to heaven or to hell: yet for the actions themselves, there are some that are neither good nor bad.

But to the point, I say, *Christians must do warrantable actions.*

Reas. 1. For first they are Gods Servants. Servants must attend upon the commands of their Masters.

2. And Secondly, We have all the ancient practices of the Saints to look upon. As first of *Noah Gen. 6. 14. and cap. 8. 1. 2. 3.* In both which chapters, he had a word of command, both for his making, and also for his entring into the ark. and ver. the 8. for his taking in accordingly clean and unclean beasts as he was commanded. c. 8. 12. and 16. *he staid other seven dayes, that is, he would have a warrant for his comming out of the Ark. And Abraham, Gen. 12. 1. had a command to go out of his country, & from his kindred, and from his fathers*

fathers house, &c. And Jacob Gen. 31. 3. must be bid to return unto the Land of his fathers and to his kindred. And in his old age though he resolve to go to Egypt, Gen. 45. 28. yet he must have and had a warrant, cap. 46. ver. 1. 2. 3. and 4. And Numb. 9. 18. At the commandment of the Lord the children of Israel journeyed, and at the commandment of the Lord they pitched, &c. Heb. 5. 4. No man taketh this honour unto him (to wit of the priesthood) but he that is called of God as was Aaron.

Therefore such as do unwarrantable actions can have no comfort in their doings. For they sin, though they think not so. Sin is not defined to be a thing against the Law only in regard of the actions of sin: but even sinful habits are forbidden in the Law; therefore mans nature being out of tune, is not so ready to do good, nor so knowing what good is. God therefore hath given rules to be observed, which not to observe is a sin. *Use. 1.*

And indeed well done will be pronounced only to those that have done what they have been bidden and warranted to do. *Mot. 1.*

Neither will Conscience be so well satisfied with doing naked actions that are destitute of command and example, and every

thing that might be a ground of comfort to the conscience of the doer.

3. Neither will God have any glory from unwarrantable actions; it is as if God were not wise enough to give rules, or as if we had not a perfect rule to walk by.

4. Lastly, It is an evil example to walk in this liberty of doing what is right in our own eyes, as if we had no Law-giver; this brings in boldness among men, and makes them fearless. But blessed is he that feareth all-ways. I omit the School uttrums upon this point, as not being so usefull to this auditory.

3. *Go ye therefore into the high wayes.* From the word of command, we come to speak of the place where they they must go. *Luk. 14. 23.* hath it thus, *Go out into the high-wayes and hedges.* The mind of the spirit is to shew us

Doct. That God in the offer of grace is altogether Without respect of persons.

Reason. For all mankind are alike to him. *Job. 31. 15.* Did not he that made me in the womb, make him? and did not one fashion us in the womb? *cap. 34. 19.* He accepteth not the persons of Princes, nor regardeth the rich more then

then the poor: for they are all the work of his hands.

Therefore are the Commissions so large. Mat. 28. 19. and Mark 16. 16. All Nations must be taught, every creature must be preached unto. Acts 10. 34 35. Then Peter opened his mouth and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every Nation, he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him. Read Acts 13. 46. 47. And mark the last words of the latter of those verses; I have thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldst be for Salvation unto the ends of the Earth. Mat 11. 25. 26. At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee O father, Lord of Heaven and Earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them to babes. Even so, father, for so it seemed good in thy sight. 1 Cor. 1. 26. For you see your calling brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called. Lastly, James 2. 5 comes in for a witness. Hearken my beloved brethren, hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the Kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?

Surely then great men, are never the happier, 1.

pier, never the neerer Heaven, never the more in Gods books for their greatness. They are deceived that think to be esteemed of God as they are in the World. Friends, you shall all stand alike naked and bare; glory not in any thing.

2. But let such take comfort, though mean, that are taught to come to Christ: and let poor ones know, that they may do as well in this respect as the greatest.

3. And let the means of grace be carefully improved, by all of all conditions: Seing God exempts none, let not exempt themselves, be ye never so poor or vile.

Not. O consider (as hath been said) to neglect grace offered is a great sin and will bring severe punishment.

Fourthly, *And as many as ye find, bid to the Marriage.* This is the last particular in the matter of the Commission. In which words we are shewed what a happiness it may prove, to be in the way of the Gospel, as it takes its walk through the world. The Apostles and Servants commissioned to preach, have Authority to invite to Christ, all that they have any occasion to meet with: while they are in the execution of their office. Not all, but *as many as ye shall find, must be bidden to the Marriage.* There
see *That*

That all are not made partakers of an Doct:
outward calling by the Preaching of the
Gospel.

It is true, many more are called then converted ; Yet there is a special providence of God in the outward call to Christ. There are times of grace for Nations, Towns and Villages. It was a good while before the Gentiles had it at all. Mat. 10 5.6. *Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any City of the Samaritans enter ye not : but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.* Acts 11. 19. *Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Steven, travelled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, Preaching the Word to none but unto the Jews only.* But Acts 13.46. it is made plain both for the Jews and Gentiles; the words are: *Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken unto you : but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life: Lo we turn to the Gentiles.* And through the fall of the Jews, Salvation is come to the Gentiles. Rom. 11.11. Sometimes in one place, sometimes in another, is the Gospel Preached ; not in all places. It

It is a precious commodity. Things of price are not commonly to be had in all places.

Object. 1 But some will say, out of Mark 16. 15. The commission is, that it must be preached to every creature in all the world.

Sol. I answer, that place is not to be taken exactly, according to the Letter; for then beasts and birds should be preached unto: but for all sorts of mankind.

Object. 2. But yet again, Rom. 10. 18. It is said there, Their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the end of the world.

Sol. 1. But for Solution; First, that place is to be understood of Gods works, as may be gathered out of Psal. 19. 1, 2. & 3. There is neither speech, nor language where their voice is not heard, that is, of the Heavens and Firmament and Sun, &c.

2. But Secondly, I answer, The Gospel may be preached to all the world, though not at the same instant time.

Object. 3. Why but then those that it is not preached unto, are to be excused; for how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a Preacher? Rom. 10. 14.

Sol. But here to answer, I say, All have Gods works to behold, which is a sufficient witness on

on Gods part, and leaves men inexcusable, *Acts 14.17.* Nevertheless he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave rain from heaven, and fruitful Seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness. And so *Rom. I. 18. 19. 20.* For the Wrath of God is revealed from heaven, &c. So that they are without excuse.

Yet first, Miserable is their condition that have no portion in the means of Grace, that are out of the way of preaching, and great is Gods favour to those that have it, if they have hearts to prize it. *Use I.*

And therefore such should be thankfull as *Mor. 2.* have this Pear.

It is no common vouchsafement.

But how shall one do to shew himself thankful therefore? *Quest.*

I answer, by his ready, joyfull and carefull receiving of it, as the *Gentiles* did, *Acts 13. 48.* so much of the 9. verse. *Ans.*

Now out of the tenth we are to speak briefly of the Servants diligence; which hath two things.

1. Their Pains. So those Servants went out into the high ways, &c.

2. The Success. And the Wedding was furnished, &c.

The

Doctr. The former doth teach us, *It is the property*
 (a) Gen 6. of Gods faithful Servants to be obedient to
 22. 12. 4. Christ their Master. (a) Noah (b) Abraham,
 22. 2. 3. 16. Paul and many more might be instanced in.
 (b) Gal. 1.
 15, 16.

For it is, first, their duty.

And Secondly, it is their frame of Spirit.

And lastly, It is their priviledge; and upon this they look as upon a priviledge, as indeed it is a very great one.

Use. 1. And therefore we may boldly say, God hath but a few faithful Servants. Sin and sinfull lusts have more obedience then God. Rom. 6. 16. *Know ye not that to whom ye yield your selves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey? &c.*

Use. 2. And it may be a good evidence, and comfort to such as delight to do Gods will.

Use. 3. And it concerns all to look after this property that desire to know themselves to be Gods faithfull Servants.

Mot. 1. Consider the necessity of this property, all profession is vain without it.

2. *To obey is better then Sacrifice, 1 Sam. 15. 22. and great is the utility and profit that comes by it.*

3. Lastly, look on examples, and adde to those

those formerly named, Christs example,
Phil. 2. 8.

Further from the Servants pains we learn,

*That an outward Call is common to good Doctr.
and bad.*

1. In respect of God, *Rom. 9. 21, Reason,*
22, 23.

2 In respect of the Godly for their pro-
bation and trial of faith, *1 Cor. 11. 19.*

3. In respect of the wicked to leave them
without excuse.

They err that would have the visible Church *Use 1*
without mixture.

See these places, *Gen. 4. 3, 4. cap. 9. 18. 25.*
cap. 17, 18, 19. cap. 27. ver. 41. Mark
10. 4. Acts 5. 1. cap. 6. 5. cap. 18. 13. Rom.
9. 6, 7. cap. 10. 16. 1 Cor. 5. 1. Jude 12. Rev.
2. 9 14, 15, 29. A floor of corn and chaff,
Matth. 3. 12. Tares and wheat, cap. 13. 24. A
draw net, 47, 48, 49.

2. Be not content with an outward Calling.

But to end; from the success we learn,

23

If all comers may be admitted, guests will Doctr,
not be wanting; men may be drawn to the out-
side for by-respects, as Balaam, Numb. 23. 10.
and so Matth. 7. 21.

And

Use.

And therefore an outward profession is not sufficient to prove a man a true Christian: and it is every mans part to look to the sincerity of his heart.

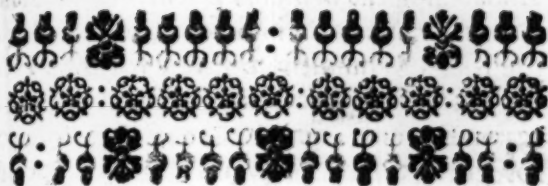
Mot.

For they are sure to be tried; for the King will come in to see his guests; which is the third particular in the invitation of the *Gentiles*. But I must here end for this time.

The



ted



The Eighth Sermon.

Matth. 22. ver. 11. & c.

*And when the King came in to see the
Guests, he saw there a man which
had not on a wedding garment. And
he saith unto him, Friend, &c.*



WE are upon the second branch
of the third thing in the pra-
dicate of this admirable pa-
rable, to wit, the latter Guests
that are invited (upon the re-
fusal of the Jews first invi-
ted, and again and again called, but refusing,
and

and abusing the messengers sent) to wit the *Gentiles*. We have finished our discourse of the Kings Commission given for their calling, and of the servants diligence in the execution thereof, out of the three immediate foregoing *verses*. Now it followeth out of this 11th. *vers.* and the *verses* following, unto the end of the 14. that we speak of the third branch or part formerly noted in the calling of the *Gentiles*, viz. the proof and trial of such as become guests, and take upon them the profession of the Christian faith. Wherein three things come before us to be taken notice of.

First, The manner of their trial.

Secondly, The issue of the trial; both these *ver. 11.*

Thirdly, The just, holy, exact, and grave proceeding of the Lord against him who upon trial was found unworthy, in the *verses* following; of which hereafter, by Gods assistance.

This 11. *verse* tells us first, of the manner of his trial, and that by three particulars, For.

First, The King himself, viz. God will try him.

And Secondly, He will do it immediately, he is said to come in to see the guests.

And

And lastly, It is implied that the visible Church is the place of Gods walk to and fro, to teach us that God takes special notice of such as make profession of religion; he will come in to see them.

From these things put together we have to observe this point.

That God Will make proof of Professors. Doct.
Professors of Godliness shall be tried, and that by God himself.

Question. But in what respect shall they be tried? *Quest.*

I answer, In point of sincerity, as touching *Ans.*
their truth of Grace. Why so? Surely it is necessary in regard of Gods glory; for first, such as are found to be sound, do much honour God, God hath much glory by them: and this is that God expects from those that wear his livery, he commands it, Psal. 50. 14. He delivers them from trouble to that end, ver. 15. *He would have our light shine before men, that they might see our good works, and glorifie our father which is in heaven. Mat. 5. 16.* And on the other side, if upon trial professors be found faulty, God hath much dishonour thereby, Rom. 2. 14. *For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through*
M

through you. But we should be to the praise of his glory. Ephes. 1. 12.

Quest. And why will God do it himself? Why will the King himself come in to see the Guests?

Ans. w. I answer, Because no instrument can do it sufficiently. For the heart is deceitfull. Jer. 17. 9. 10. No man, no not of himself, can find out the depths of the heart. And although the Lord lend man a candle to search the heart with, yet it will only a little serve for his own heart; It will not serve to find out the heart of another.

Quest. Quest But when Will God prove men and try men?

Ans. w. God trieth daily, and he will try at the last day. In this life, he hath his many wayes of trial; sometimes he trieth by affliction. Psal. 66. 10. 11. For thou Lord, hast proved us, thou hast tried us as silver is tried. Thou broughtest us into the net, thou laidst afflictions upon our loines. And sometime again the Lord trieth by prosperity, in and by which many are found faulty. O the bewitching sunshines of this world! Demas hath forsaken me (saith Paul) and hath embraced this present world.

2 Tim. 4.
10.

Use. 1. Folly therefore it is, and a very vain conceit and practice to care only to make a fair shew among men. Such seem to think God

God regards not, such *Job* speaks of chapter 22.13.14. This is atheistical blindness.

Let every sincere heart put on a crown of rejoycing upon his head; and tread upon reproaches, and evil speeches; God is judge himself, he will try himself. *The Lord knoweth the way of the righteous.* Psal. 1. 6. It is a small thing for *Paul* to be judged by man; it is his comfort, *that he that judgeth him is the Lord* 1 Cor. 4. 4. 5.

2.

It is every mans part to be fitted to approve himself to God, and not only to men.

2.

For first, Gods approbation is better then the approbation of all the World; *If he justify, who shall condemn* Rom. 8. 34

Mot. I.

Secondly, The necessity of Gods approbation should move us to fit to have it. Nothing will serve if this be wanting. All mans commendation, if God subscribe it not, is worth nothing. 2 Cor. 10. 18 *But not he (saith Paul there) that commendeth himself is approved. but he whom the Lord commendeth.*

2.

Thirdly, Let us take notice how God hath prevented us, to fit us for this so needfull business; We have gracious means, to fit our selves for the Lords trial. viz. the clear light of Gods word; this is a *lampe for our feet and a light for our paths*, Psal. 119. 105. We live under a larger Canon then the *Jews* did;

3.

M 2

Gods

*cereus in
vitium
flecti, moni-
toribus as-
per.* Hor.

Gods word will teach a young man to cleanse his way, Psal. 119. 9. And yet of all Ages they are most untoward. Waxy to be shaped unto all evil forms, stubborn to teachers, having their minds upon a thousand vanities; Yet Gods word will teach such. Let this move us, the gracious means we live under. So much for that.

2.

The issue of the trial follows. *He saw there a man that had not on a wedding garment.* Upon trial there is a fault found. But what is the fault? And with whom is it found? for both these particulars are here to be taken notice of. I shall put off the first from this place, because it will fall in to be handled in the next verse, where his fault is particularly charged upon him.

Now of the latter first. There is a man found faulty.

Quest.
Ans.

Quest. What but one?

Ans. The scope is not to that purpose; For doubtless among so many *Gentiles*, there were many that wanted the wedding garment; for there be many hypocrites in every visible Church. Many people came in. *Isaiah 2. ver. 2. 3.* among which there could not but be many unsound ones. But it is spoken in the singular Number, to shew the strictness of the search. *He saw a man;* not one

one can escape the eyes of the Lord. Hence observe.

When the Lord comes to view his Church, Doct. and to see his Guests, he will find out every unsound one in it.

And the reason is, because he is an al-seeing God, none can go from his presence, *Psal.* Reason. 139. from the 1. to the 6. *verse read.* *Jer.* *Deus est* 23. 23. 24. *Dan.* 2. 22. *Heb.* 4. 13. And yet *totus ocu-* more evidently, *because in him we live and* * *Gen.* 3. *move and have our being,* *Acts* 17. 28. I might 8. 9. heap up places of Scripture, to shew how † *Cap* 4 9. God hunteth out sinners. * *Adam,* † *Cain,* † *Exod.* || the People of *Israel*, when they had wor- 32. 1. 6. 7. shipped the calfe which *Aaron* made, the *Joshua* 7. Lord knows it. And sacrilegious *Achan* is 10. 11. 20. found out by this al-seeing God. And *Gehazi,* 21. And *Judas,* And *Ananias* and *Saphira*, all 2 *Kings* 5. these were spied out by the Lord. The dark- 20. ness is no darkness with him, the night is as 26. clear as the day, &c. But I hasten to the *Uses.* 14. 15. 16. 21. Because I chiefly look upon the next Verse to *Acts.* 5. 1. 2. 3. speak of the fault charged upon him that is here spied out.

Use. 1. They are fool-deceived, that think *Use.* 1. their wayes and works are hidden from the Lord.

Lord. Yet this is not only the fault of hard-hearted sinners: but even of *Jacob* and *Israel*. *Isai.* 40. 27. 28. We think God sees not or regards not our misery; this is our folly. But on the other side, What a poor thing it is to think to flie from the presence of the Lord: yet so foolish was *Jonah*, *cap.* 1. 3. 4. He paid the fare of a ship, and went into it, *to go to Tarshish from the presence of the Lord; but could he?* O no, it followeth *vers.* 4. *God sends after him With a Witness.*

Use 2.

And certainly, wofull is the case of all sinners, yea of the closest and best coloured Hypocrites; they shall be seen in their proper colours by the Lord. *Isai* 29. 15. 16. *Wo unto them that seek deep to hide their counsel from the Lord, and their works are in the dark, and they say, who seeth us? and who knoweth us? Surely your turning of things upside down shall be esteemed as the potters clay: For, shall the work say of him that made it, he made me not? Or shall the thing framed say of him that framed it, he had no understanding? It is a notable place.*

Use. 3.

And therefore Lastly, (to end this point and *ver.*) Be advised to take heed of sin; no corners are darke enough to commit sin in. God will see as well at midnight as at noon day.

day. Pray to God to unite your hearts, that you may fear his name; it is a good expression; when our hearts are united to God, we shall stand in awe, and shall not sin. Especially take heed of Hypocrisie; for the danger is great of that sin, as may be gathered out of *Mat. 25. 41.* their portion of misery is none of the least, as you may see by the Lords dealing with this poor wretch, which is next to be handled.

Verses 12. 13. 14.

And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither, not having a wedding garment? and he was speechless. Then said the King unto his servants, Binde him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. For many are called, but few are chosen.

HAVING finished out of the foregoing *verse*, the manner, and issue of the trial of this unworthy Guest: I now come to the third particular noted in the Lords proceeding against him; Wherein three other things are observable.

1. His examination about his offence.

M 4

Secondly,

Secondly, His conviction thereupon; both which are in the 12. *ver.*

Thirdly, His condemnation, or the Lords Commission and warrant for his execution, with the ground or reason thereof. *ver.* 13. 14. of which afterward.

In his Examination we have,

- { 1. The matter laid to his charge.
- { 2. The manner of Gods dealing.

How camest thou hither not having a Wedding garment; is his charge. This man came with others to the marriage of the Kings son, but he came unprovided, he was without a Wedding garment; and this is the summ of his accusation, and the fault that is laid to his charge; aggravated by his impudency, in daring to come in that trim. *How camest thou in hither,* &c. that is, how didst thou dare be so bold, to come hither unprepared?

The great question is, what is meant here by the Wedding garment. The Papists understand hereby love and good works, but they miss the mark. By the Wedding garment we are here to understand, the righteousness of our Lord Jesus, put on by the hand of a true saving and justifying faith, and manifested by a holy, sincere, and upright walking in the wayes of godliness: and therefore
the

the Apostle *Paul*. speaking to this purpose, and somewhat altering this phrase; wills us to put off the Works of darkness, and to put on the armour of light, Rom. 13. 12. And in the next two verses he expounds his meaning, viz. *Not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying; but putting on Christ, &c.* where Christ and a mans own lusts, his sinfull lusts are opposed, read ver. 13. and 14. and he doth more fully mention this *Ephes. 4. 21, 22, 23*. In these words and phrases, *To hear him, to be taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus. To put off the old man, to be renewed in the spirit of our minds, to put on the new man; All which is performed by the power of sound and saving faith. For ye are all the children of God by faith in Jesus Christ, saith Paul, Gal. 3. 26. And again, For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ, ver. 27.*

By all which you may see plainly what it is to have, or to want the Wedding garment. The sum of the Charge brought against this Professor in my Text, was, that he wanted sincerity, he was not that he professed himself to be. He drew no vertue from Christ, he had not put on Christ by Faith, and therefore could not walk in sound and sincere obedience.

Doctr.

I observe this Doctrine.

It is a shamefull thing for any to make profession of Religion, and not to walk in truth and sincerity.

As on the other side, It is most glorious and comfortable to have honest and good hearts; and such are comely creatures; such have the Wedding garment, and shall stand with boldness before God in all Trials. You may read for proof of the Doctrine, *Isaiah 1. 1, 2, 3. and verses 10 11.* where the Lord by *Isaiah* keeps wofull doings (as we use to say) with the *Jews* about this very thing.

Reason.

And indeed such persons pollute and defile their holy profession. *Their Sacrifices are an abomination to the Lord, Prov. 15. 8.* Yea their whole way, viz. whatsoever they do, *is an abomination to the Lord, ver. 9.* They bring scandal to the holy Religion which they profess, whether Ministers (as *Elies* sons, *1 Sam. 2. 17.* made the offering of the Lord to be abhorred) or People, *Rom. 2. 24.* by whose carriage the name of God is blasphemed or evil spoken of.

Use 1.

Then wo to those that do so. They shall answer for their uncleanness before the Lord, they shall be called to account, they shall

shall hear, *Friend, how camest thou in hither?* as this unworthy guest here. But unto the wicked said God, *What hast thou to do to take my Covenant in thy mouth, Psal. 50. ver. 16. to the 22. verse. Wo to you Scribes, and Pharisees, hypocrites, saith Christ, Matth. 23. 13.*

The Use in the second place may be to Use 2. comfort those that walk in the ways of Christianity in sincerity and truth; they are most assuredly clad with the Wedding-garment, which this poor wretch (in the Text) wanted: they shall be welcom to the Lord at all times, come when they will: for they smell in his nostrils *as a field which he hath blessed.*

And thirdly, we should all be carefull to Use 3. have on the Wedding-garment, and to try whether we have it or no.

For first, the glory of the Garment, the excellency of him that hath it, may move us to look after this Garment: Oh to have our robes washed, and made white in the blood of the Lamb, will render us glorious creatures. Such may by the Law (as we say) rejoyce and be glad, as are so made ready, as are arrayed in this fine linnen, which is clean and white: *This is the righteousness and beauty of Saints.*

Mat. 1.

Rev. 7. 14

Cap. 19.

7, & 8.

Secondly

Secondly the necessity ; for else, *Friend how camest thou in hither ?* will be heard one day. All Sacrifices and Services are odious and abominable without this Wedding Garment, *Prov. 15. 8, 9. The prayer of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord, &c.* Read to this purpose *Isaiah* the first chapter, from the tenth verse to the 16. No sound comfort to the soul where this is not, sorrow of heart and a curse belongs to deceitfull workers. *Cursed be he that doth the Work of the Lord deceitfully, Jer. 48. 10.* Cursed in his very prayers and performances of Religious Exercises, though holy for the matter. It is good counsell therefore, *Rev. 3. 18. to buy this white raiment,* that nakedness be covered, and may not appear, which will procure a curse.

3.

Eph. 4.
16. to the
22.

Thirdly, the difficulty of having this Garment, should move us to be solicitous, and industrious about it. Naturally we are all liars, apt to deceive our selves. We must know, *that all have not faith. 2 Thes. 3. 2.* Nay few; *For when the Son of man cometh, shall he finde faith on the earth ? Luk. 18. 8.* And yet none can put on the Lord Jesus without it. Such as walk after the course of the Gentiles, which know not God, have not put on *Christ* ; they have but an outside at most of Christi-

Christianity, and not the Wedding Garment here spoken of.

We are next to speak of the manner of his Examination, implied in the word, *Friend*. The Manner of Gods dealing.

But why doth the Lord call this unworthy guest Friend? he knew him to be his Foe and Adversary, and a dissembling Friend.

I answer, he doth thus term him by an Irony, for his further conviction; in that he pretended to be that which he was not, and so sinned against his own knowledge and conscience. So his seeming holy profession did the more aggravate his wickedness. And also it may be, that the Lord thus proceeds, to take away all exception, and to stop up every starting hole. Men now pick quarrels at the manner of Ministers reproving them, it is a common shift among us in this place (so wise are men to their own hurt) to put off just reproofs with accusations of passion, and bitterness in the Speakers of the Word; as *Jeremiah* was called the raving Prophet, and accused to have his ears more open then was fit, to that tale-telling fellow *Barnab* the son of *Neriah*: So men instead of sorrowing, and making satisfaction for those evils of injustice, deceit, rejecting of Christ, and despising

spising the Church (which they are plainly guilty of) complain of the Reprovers. But God will prevent them, he will call them Friends, yet (and that justly) cut their throats (as we say) They shall have no hole to pick in the manner of Gods dealing with them, they shall have no hole to creep out at. See how he speaks *Ezek. 18. 25.* *Yet ye say, The way of the Lord is not equal. Hear now, O house of Israel; &c.* He calls them house of Israel, reasons fairly with them. And so again, *Isa. 5. ver. 1, 2, 3.* where he giveth loving language, *well beloved, and beloved, and his vineyard;* yet the scope of this whole Chapter is to denounce judgments against them for their sins. So that we may sum up all in this one observation.

Doct.

That when God shall come to have to do with wicked men, and shall call them to an account, and bring them to examination: he will so speak and demean himself, as that they shall not have a word to say against his proceeding, nor in defence of themselves.

Use.

They surely are fools that dare continue in their sins under such poor shifts; The Preacher is too sharp, an angry man; but will this make you guiltless? Say it be true, that we

we often spoil our work through our indiscretion ; yet know, God will not ; he hath no passions ; he will be too hard for you ; he will call the sinner *friend*, and yet condemn him.

The question (Neighbours) will not be, Whether we speak in passion ; but Whether it be not against even a principle of nature, to disannul or alter mens wills, to embezeel things committed to your trust, to convert publick stocks to private uses. Read how *Paul* argues, *Gal. 3. 15.* to strengthen the Doctrine of Faith ; and take the former part of his Discourse, and apply it to your selves for false dealing in publick stocks, and altering the uses of things contrary to the wills of the dead. You will have nothing to say to God, though you have to us, who yet allow not our selves in any expressions unsutable to the work we have in hand.

And Secondly, let us learn and endeavour *Use 2.* to imitate the Lord more and more ; that we may the more successfully do our business ; Judges and Magistrates, Preachers and Pastors : We should do as *Josuah* did *cap. 7. 19.* *My son* (saith he to *Achan*) *give I pray thee glory to the Lord God of Israel. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil-speaking be put away from you with all*

all malice, and be ye kinde one te another, and tender hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christs sake hath forgiven you, Eph. 4 31, 32.

Mot. 1. And indeed God is our Father, and should not children imitate their Father?

2. Secondly, the contrary practice is a grief to his Spirit, *by which we are sealed to the day of Redemption.* This is forbidden, Eph. 4, 30.

3. Besides it is a snare to sinners, and hinders the working of our Phyllick.

Use. 3. But thirdly, for a third Use. If the Lord be courteous to his enemies, surely much more to his faithfull Servants; yea, though there be much weakness and frailty in them. So we see in *Jonah, chap. 4. ver. 9, 10, 11.* *Jonah* is desperately pettish, very much out of frame, yet God speaks kindly to him, reasons fairly with him. He knoweth our frame, and considers our infirmities; he is God and not man.

So much of the unworthy guests examination.

Now follows his conviction. And he was speechless, he was haltered, *At ille obmutuit, vel ad verbum, at ille capistratus erat.* He was dumb'd, muzled, he had a bit in his jaws, he was tongue-tied, he could not speak.

Lct

688 271
m 311.

Let this be the Doctrine;

A wicked man when God shall have to do Doct.
with him, shall not be able to say a word in his
own defence.

How weak will thy hand and thy heart
be, when God shall have to do with thee
O sinner?

And the Reason is, because conscience will *Reason.*
take Gods part, and tell him that he is guilty.
For indeed it is the office of conscience to
deal plainly, *Rom. 2. 15.* It will bear witness,
and either accuse or excuse. Conscience is al-
ways good so far forth as it is conscience. We
use to say such a man hath little conscience;
and, thou hast no conscience at all; Whereby
we mean, they whom we so accuse have little
or none; their conscience is, as it were, laid a-
sleep, or made drunk. But I say, that which
is of it left is always good: and the judge-
ment which God will give to men, shall be
upon the testimony of their own consci-
ence. (a)

But will some say, No man can make de-
fence for himself in Gods presence, be he
never so good: how then do you say wick-
ed men shall not be able, as if others
could?

*Condena-
tio ex pro-
pria con-
scientia. -
Muscul.*

N

Doth

Doth not Job say, cap. 9. v. 2, 3. *But how should man be just with God? if he will contend with him, he cannot answer him one of a thousand.* And in Eccles. 7. 20. *For there is not a just man upon earth that doth good and sinneth not.* And Isa 64. 6. *But we are all an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags, and we do all fade as a leaf, and our iniquities like the winde have taken us away,* Rom. 3. 9, 10. *Jews and Gentiles are all under sin; as it is written, there is none righteous, no not one.* Therefore not only wicked men shall be speechless before God.

I answer, Although no man can justify himself in regard of any perfect obedience of his own (because indeed all a mans perfection is to bewail his imperfection, and to cleave close to the imputed righteousness of Christ by Faith) yet the sincerity of a mans heart, in a carefull endeavour to honour God, is accepted of God, & an evidence of Faith, whereby he may have comfortable access to God. So Hezekiab, 2 Kin. 20. 3. appeals to the Lord. But a wicked man hath an accusing Conscience, but no Christ at all to bear him up.

Again, such as are sincere, do cleave to the Lord with full purpose of heart, though they are full of failings, and therefore they shall

shall not be so convicted and made speechless as wicked men shall.

But may no body at the last day have a word to say? Is it not said, *Matth. 7.22. many shall say unto me in that day, &c. and cap. 25.44. They that set on the left hand, are brought in excusing themselves, &c.* Object. 2.

I answer, that place is to be understood of the continuance of the hardness, and deceit of some mens hearts even unto death. I remember a good note of *Mr. Perkins* upon that place, *Matth. 7.22.* to this purpose. A man may live and die with a conceit of his happy condition, &c. and thats the scope of both those places to shew the hardness of of some mens hearts even unto the very last. Sol.

And Secondly, If any should be so impudent, they will quickly be answered. It will be to no purpose for them to plead in their own defence. Christ will quickly cut their combs, as *ver. 23.* of the seventh chap. and *ver. 45.* of the 25. chap. you may see, they are sentenced notwithstanding, and are executed accordingly.

So much for the explanation of the Doctrine.

The Uses follow.

And first for *Information.* Wicked men Use. i.
that

2. that live in opposition to God and goodness will one day be as mute as fishes; though here
 3. they vapour it in their ungodly courses, or colour over their wickedness by denying the Fact, or else wrest Gods word in the defence of their sinfull courses. They are never the clearer of their sins. O saith the drunkard, who dare say I was drunk? I will make thee Sirrah answer it before thy Betters; I will make thee answer it in the highest Court in *England*. But Sirrah (sith thou art good at that, I mean, to swagger and vapour) let me tell thee for all thy big words, thou shalt not have a word to say before God, when he shal come to deal with thee. Although men think to outface them that shall seek their Reformation; yea, be ready to take their remedy as in a matter of false accusation; especially, if they can get some great man to back them: yet when the Lord takes them in hand, they will be speechless. I will tell you a dream of one of quality, related to my self, by the dreamer himself. Said he,
- + I dreamd the day of judgement was come, and all men appeared before Christ. Some were white, others spotted. Me thought (said he) I was all white, saving that I had one black spot upon my breast, which I covered with my hand. Upon the separation of these

two sorts, I got among the white on the right hand; glad was I. But at last a narrower search was made, and one came and pluckt away my hand from my breast; then appeared my spot, and I was thrust away among the spotted ones. I pray consider; what this Gentleman dreamed, all of us shall finde one day to be true, when such as are now bold sinners, & have words at will, shalbe speechless.

Would ye then not be speechless in that day under a condemning conscience? Labour to get and keep a good conscience here.

Use. 2.

1 Joh. 4. 7. *Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgement, &c.* Let us labour for the Wedding-garment; for if our conscience condemn us, condemnation will follow that conviction.

Rev. 20. 12. *And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened; and another book was opened which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.* Here are two Books, Gods Book of Science or Prescience, he knoweth all things long before. The other is the book of conscience; this is our own book; this will stop every mans mouth that is out of Christ. *He was speechless,* saith the Text. The Commission or

warrant for his execution, which also includes the sentence of condemnation, follows in the next verses, in which we have the sentence *ver. 13*. The ground or reason, *ver. 14*. In the Sentence we have Circumstances, and the Substance. The Circumstances are three. 1. The party commissionating, the King. 2. The party commissioned, the servants. 3. The time, Then. For the better handling of these particulars, I crave your prayers. And so much for this time.

The end of the 12. *verse*.

The



The ninth Sermon.

Matth. 22. ver. 13. 14.

*Then the King said to the Ser-vants,
Bind him hand and foot, and take
him away, and cast him into outer
darkness, there shall be weeping
and gnashing of teeth ; for many
are called, but few are chosen.*



I have finished (as you may remember) the examination and conviction of this unworthy Guest, and false-hearted Professour, out of the foregoing verses. I ended my last Sermon with the division of these two verses now again read unto you. I will not repeat what hath been delivered, but proceed to that which remains to be spoken out of these verses.

N 4

The

The party that gives the Commission for the execution of this faulty person, is said to be *the King*. that is, *Almighty God*, who had vouchsafed the means of Grace to the *Gentiles*. But (this poor wretch among others abusing it) he gives a Commission of another nature. There was a time when this King was all white, but now he is all red. I have shewed you out of the foregoing verses, that God woes the world in the preaching of the Gospel, *Go tell them that were bidden, I have prepared my dinner, &c.* You have heard of *Tamberlains* colours he was wont to display; and his behaviour, and dealing with places upon refusall of his offer of mercy. Friends, the Lord holds out to you the white flag of mercy: he hath bid me tell you, that his Justice is satisfied, his wrath is appeased in Christ; if you will not come in, if you will not submit, he hath (you see) in this Text other colours to display. *Xerxes* wept over his Army, in consideration of their Mortality. O that I could compassionate these hundreds that sit here this day. Sirs, a thousand to one. but some of you will be damned, or else you will escape better then ever so many people met together did in this World: consider seriously what I say.

But

shall be punished.

185

But I come to observe some points of Doctrine; The first is,

As God hath power and will to bestow and afford the means of Grace: so also to punish the Doct. abuse thereof any way.

Any way, I say. My meaning is, whether by a Swinelike carelesness, or (which is worse) by a doglike barking at the Gospel, and biting the Messengers, or an Hypocritical closing with the Church. God will punish the abuse of the offers of Grace (I say) any way, with severity.

Gen. 6. 7. And the Lord said, I will destroy man whom I have created, from the face of the Earth, &c. God did strive with the old World 120. years; it will not be ruled, the People were diobedient, When the long suffering of God waited in the dayes of Noah; Ye know they were drowned, and are now Spirits in prison. As the Lord had a time to offer Grace and Mercy by Noah: so he had a time to plague the refusers of it. The Lord suffered Lot to live a while among the Sodomites, and surely he was not idle: he was a righteous man, they vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawfull deeds. Then saith the Lord, because the cry of Sodom,
and

1 Per. 3.
20.

2 Pet. 2. 8.
Gen. 18.
20. 21.

Gen. 19.
24. 25.

and Gomorra is great, and because their sin is very grievous, I will go down now, and see whither they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me: and if not, I will know. What's the conclusion? the Lord did destroy them: He caused fire and brimstone to come down from Heaven, and he overthrew those four Cities of the plain, Sodom, Gomorra, Admah and Zeboim. So for Jerusalem, you may read Luke 13. ver. 34. 35. Prophets were sent to them, and Apostles, and Christ himself was among them; he would have gathered her children together, as a Hen doth gather her brood under her wings; they would not. They killed the prophets, and stoned them that were sent among them. What followeth? Behold your house is left unto you desolate, &c. And so cap. 19. 43. 44. Thine Enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground and thy children within thee: and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another, because thou knowest not the time of thy visitation. He that may and will not, when he will, he shall not. O that you would read sometime, even this very day, Prov. 1. from the 20. verse unto the 32. I am loth to spend so much time now in reading those verses.

verses. The summ is, *Wisdom crieth*, woeth, useth many arguments, but cannot be heard, is disregarded: You shall find there what followeth. O sad expression, *I will* (saith God) *laugh at your calamitie, and mock when your fear cometh.* God is just as well as mercifull.

Is it so, that God which laid erewhile, Go ye out, and fetch in all, go tell them my son is dead and risen again; tell them, that if they will come away, while my white flag is abroad, they shall have mercy; is now become so severe upon the abuse of his mercy? then foolish, if not mad, are they that do not consider this, that do not believe it, that do so set and settle themselves daily to abuse the means of Grace.

Some by taking no notice at all thereof.

1.

Others by making profession a cloak for their knavery.

2.

Others by undervaluing it.

3.

Others by having the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ in respect of persons.

4.

Others by biting at, and devouring (what in them lies) the honourable Professors of Religion, and Ministers of the Gospel.

5.

O where shall I begin, and when shall I make an end! I have much to say; it may be you

² *Agg.*
Luk. 12.
 10.

you will be angry, tis no matter, hear me howsoever: Let me speak, though ye strike me afterward. I will labour to pluck you out by the ears from your miserable condition, though ye be angry with me for it. It is better fear (and so also anger) a knave then kill him. You think God will go in white still. Thou fool, which art without understanding, thou witless fellow (as the word in the Original signifies in *Luke*) dost thou think God will cease to be God, and deny himself? (as he must do if, he should not avenge himself, and vindicate his Gospel from those horrible neglects, contempts, and abuses which it is even, as it were, overloaded with, by ungodly men.) No no. Thou shalt find he hath red colours as well as white; he will tumble and rowl his garments in blood. O consider this, ye that cozen, deceive, oppress, that flea off the skin of the necessitous man, and chop his flesh and the flesh of his hunger-starved children as pye-meat, or hearbs for the pot; and are no more moved then the stones of the Wall. You that live in pleasures and satisfie your sensual appetites; dost thou think God made thee for nothing else but to play the fool; to ride or run after a Hound, or a Hawk? Buzzard that thou art! The Lord set home
 what

what I say at this time. And you that trample the sweet Ordinances of breaking bread, &c. under the feet of your Superstitious Ignorance, Pride, Passion, or Worldliness; know, that the Ordinances which we hold forth, are the Ordinances of Jesus Christ. And though we are earthen vessels, yet the Gospel is a treasure. And you that creep in among Gods People, and yet are strangers to the life of grace, and want the wedding garment; know for certain, that, that God that bid me not along ago to woo you, and even to compell you to come in, hath now bid me tell you, that *you shall be bound hand and foot, and cast into outer darkness, where there is weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth.* How dare men slight the hot thunderbolts that are now darted out of his word against them? I am sent to every blasphemer of God, hinderer, or slanderer of his word, to every adulterer, to every one that is in malice, and envy, to every despiser of Gods Church, with heavy tidings, *They shall be confounded and put to shame, they shall be turned back, and brought to confusion. They shall be as chaffe before the Winde, & the Angel of the Lord shall chase them. Their way shall be dark and slippery, & the Angel of the Lord shall persecute them.* Of all the judgements that came upon the

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Psal. 35: 7
4, 5, 6.

the

the *Jews*, I find this to be the chiefest, that whereas they were once the children of the Kingdom, they are now in outer darkness, *Matthew* 8. 12. that is, whereas in the Church there is light, they are now cast out of the Church; and others from the East and West are got into their priviledges, *viz.* to sit down in the Kingdom out of which they are banished. And a curse of contempt upon them, is fallen on them. Whereever they come, they are a despised People; But yet this is their greatest unhappiness, that they are the greatest Enemies in the World to the Christian faith, through the blindness of their mind; for they are in outer darkness, even as it were in Hell. This makes them to gnash their teeth at Christ and Christians. This is the fruit of their rejecting Christ. This plague falls many wayes: Sometimes he blinds mens minds, and hardens their hearts, that they cannot profit by them, though they live under them. Sometimes they shall be so wicked as not to come to the places where the Ordinances are: or if they come there, they shall like the spider, suck out poyson instead of hony: And so their table is made a snare unto them, and the word which should be the favour of life unto them, becomes the favour of death unto death.

Let

Let my counsel be harkned unto. Take Use 2.
heed of abusing the means of Grace, any way. Causes of
I have mentioned many in my former use. But this evil,
now upon this use of advice, I shall en-
quire after some causes of this epidemical evil.

One would think men should not be so
foolish.

First therefore we shall find deadness of
heart. Pray therefore for quickning Grace.
Say which David. *Quicken me O Lord for
thy names sake.* Psal. 143. 11. Say to the Lord,
I have a dead heart, I do not consider thy
rich offer, or thy severe justice; keep a groan-
ing and crying to the Lord.

1.

But secondly, People press exceedingly
upon the mercy of God. Therefore it is that
the worst of People love to hear discourses
of Gods mercy. Tis true, we cannot look too
much upon Gods mercy: We may say of it as
David doth of Gods anger, *Who knoweth the
power of thine anger, &c.* So who knoweth
the highth, and depht, length and breadth of
Gods mercy? it hath four dimensions in that
place, *Ephes. 3. 18.* We cannot think of it
any way answerable to the truth of it. *Thy
mercy (O Lord) is in the heavens; and thy
faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds. Thy
righteousness is like the great Mountains, thy
judgements are a great deep; O Lord, thou
preservest*

2.

Psal. 92.
11.

Psal. 36. 5.
6, 7.

preservest man and beast. How excellent is thy
 loving kindness, O God! therefore the chil-
 dren of men put their trust under the shadow
 of thy wings. And again. The Lord is graci-
 and full of compassion: slow to anger, and of
 great mercy. The Lord is good to all: and
 his tender mercies are over all his works. But
 yet for remedy and advice, we must know,
 that Gods mercy doth not destroy his justice.
 Where you have a glorious discovery of
 Jehovahs back-parts, *Exod. 34. 6. 7.* this is
 among, *That will by no means cleer the guilty,*
visiting the iniquitie of the fathers upon the
children, and upon the childrens children, unto
the third and to the fourth Generation. Hear
 what is written, *Deut. 29. 19. 20.* And it come
 to pass when he heareth the Words of this curse,
 that he bless himself in his heart, saying, *I shall*
have peace, though I walk in the imagination of
mine heart, to add drunknes to thirst: the Lord
will not spare him; but then the anger of the
Lord, and his jealousie shall smoke against that
man, and all the curses that are written in this
book shall lie upon him, and the Lord shall blot
his name from under heaven. O it is a fear-
 full thing to sin against the riches of Grace.
Rom. 2. 4. 5. saith Paul there, *Despiseest thou*
the riches of his goodness, forbearance and long-
suffering, not knowing that the goodness of God
leadeth

leadeth thee to repentance? But after thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up unto thy self wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgement of God. It is a sign such souls are not partakers of mercy, which are upon Gods mercy bold to sin. O hard-hearted soul, thou art telling of Gods mercy; why dost thou not tell of his Justice? the Apostle tells thee, *The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven, with his mighty Angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction, &c.* 2 Thes. 1. 7, 8, 9. Be ye perswaded therefore before the sealing time, before the Lord hath sworn against you, to accept of Christ, and to take heed of hypocrisie, and that ye be not found naked; lest this Sentence be heard, and Commission given by the King for your execution to his Servants.

2.

And so we fall upon the second branch of the circumstantial part of this Commission, the persons commissioned, *his Servants*. Then said the King to his Servants. These Servants are certain instruments which God makes use of, some in this life, some in the life to come.

O

The

The Servants which God makes use of here on earth to binde hand and foot, &c. are First, Ministers; these are Gods high Commissioners to binde and to loose, *Matth. 18. 18* *Verily, I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall binde on earth shall be bound in heaven, &c.* It is true, it is properly the work of the Church. But the Ministers are appointed of God for the doing of the work. I will give you the words of Dr. *Falk* in his Annotations upon the *Rhemists* Testament, upon *1 Cor. 5. 4.* in answer to that passage pretended to be taken out of *Chrysostom* upon those words, *Tell the Church, Matth. 18. Complain to the Church, that is, to the Prelates and Presidents thereof:* saith he, *The authority of Excommunication pertaineth to the whole Church, although the judgment and execution thereof is to be referred to the Governors of the Church, which exercise that authority as in the name of Christ, so in the name of the Whole Church to avoid confusion.* So he. *It is a sad business to be bound by those Servants of the King of Heaven.*

Secondly, Magistrates are executioners too of Gods vengeance; *They bear not the sword in vain. Rom. 13. 4. For he is the Minister of God, a revenger to execute Wrath upon him that doth evil, in the same verie.* VVhen people

people will not take warning by Gods Ministers words, nor by his judgements on others: God suffers them to fall into the hands of Magistrates, who have places of pain and shame, Gaules, Bridewells, stocks, whipping-Posts and Gallowses. These bind neck and heels also in Gods name, and as his Servants.

Thirdly, Military men, which have the sword of war in their hands, are Gods Servants. *Asbur* is the rod of Gods anger, and the staff in his hand is Gods indignation. God sends such, and gives them a charge to take the spoil, and to take the prey, and to tread down the people of his wrath as the mire of the streets, Isa. 10. 5, 6.

These are most terrible of all; for first, they do not usually proceed so regularly as either of the former. Ministers have a word to proceed by, and Magistrates have Laws; but weapons know not laws; *Will* is the rule, if not rage, or desperate fury usually. *Arma ne- sciunt leges.* *Asbur* hath not God in his thoughts, when he goeth to destroy and cut off nations not a few, Isa. 10. 7.

Secondly, their Bindings have much cruelty, their Language is more terrible, they are people of a fierce language; Cut their skulls, cleave their heads, even when I should

have thought a reproof had been enough; have I heard from these Sons of *Mars*; for so have I heard them stile themselves in a bravado. I intend not to dishonour the Imployment; we have found much of God in many of them of latter times. But yet they are the most dreadfull Servants of the Lord.

Fourthly, God hath binding Angels both good and bad. *Herod* is smitten by an Angel of the Lord, *Acts* 12. 23. And 185 thousand are killed in one night by an Angel of the Lord, *2 Kings* 19. 35. And the souls of ungodly men shall be bound by these binders, and tormented. Yea, Devils are let loose often by God, to do mischief, and to plague such as will not put their trust in God; and others also sometimes for their tryal, as *Job*.

You see then this Doctrine,

Doctr. God hath servants everywhere fitted to execute vengeance. When he is pleased to give them the word of command.

This Doctrine is from the second circumstance, *Then said he to his servants.*

You shall finde, when the Lord had a purpose to destroy *Ahab*, the Devil is ready, and takes

takes a Commission from the Lord, to be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his Prophets.
1 Kin. 22. 20, 21.

The Reason is, All creatures are the Lords *Reason.* servants, and he can command and make them to do his will, even the meanest and worst of them. Frogs, Lice, Flies, Rivers, Fire, yea the snuff of a candle, the tile of an house, a crum of bread; God can easily impower to the destruction of man.

Learn therefore in the first place, that God *Use 1.* wants not means to punish wicked men. He hath servants in every place to speak to, a rod in every corner to make use of.

VVo therefore to all such, as either regard *2.* not his grace, or abuse it with their bold hypocrisie, or any other way.

But next and lastly, for this point; Be *3.* exhorted to dread his power, and speedily to turn to him by Repentance.

For now the door of Heaven standeth *Mot. 1.* open; the means of grace lasteth; despise them not. We have power more then ye are aware of: despise us not. The Lord will own what his Servants do, for he hath bidden us do what we do. Though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh. For *the Weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of*
O 3 strong

The abuse of the means of Grace

strong holds, 2 Cor. 10. 4, 5. And again, Having in readiness to revenge all disobedience, ver. 6. So little account as ye make of our binding by word and Ordinances, it is terrible, and will be found to be so at last.

2.

But Secondly, for a second Motive; Vengeance cometh suddenly, unexpectedly, if it be not prevented. I should insist upon this matter as it is a Motive; but it leads me to the third and last branch of the Circumstantial part of my Text, from the word, *Then*. *Then the King said to his Servants*. That is, presently upon Conviction followeth execution. Or then, that is, when Gods time is come; Or then, that is suddenly, unexpectedly.

The last
Circum-
stance.

From whence we may learn this most certain Oracle of Truth,

Doctr.

When Gods time is come, when the conviction is past, suddenly and unexpectedly shall vengeance seize upon hypocrites and ungodly men.

So the Flood came on the world; They were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, untill the day that Noah entered in to the Ark: and knew not till the Flood came

and

and took them all away, Matth. 24. 38, 39. God seems sometimes to delay, to be slow; but it is not so. The Lord is not slack concerning his Promise, nor concerning his Threats neither, as some men count slackness, 2 Pet 3.9. Neither is he rash or hasty, he useth deliberation, he giveth time, he calleth, he stretcheth out his hand, he will be refused, dis-regarded; his Counsel must be set at nought before, *before fear cometh as desolation, and destruction as a whirlwinde.* Read Prov. 1. 24, 25, 26. 27. Yea, all the day long he will wait, and spread out his hands unto a rebellious People, which walketh in a way that is not good, after their own thoughts. *Isaiah 65. 2.* But when Gods time is come, the time set of old, then cometh sorrow, *as upon a woman in travell.* For *when they shall say peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, 1 Thes. 5. 3.* Then out-comes Gods wrath with a vengeance. The sword without, and terrour within, shall destroy both the young men, and the virgins: the suckling also with the man of gray hairs.

Then said the King unto his Servants.

That is, when God hath given time.

When mens sins be ripe.

And when security seizeth on sinners.

1.

2.

3.

O 4

When

4. When it is most for Gods glory, and Honor to destroy his Enemies, and get him a name by making bare his arm.
5. When it will be most for his Churches good, then, then, and not till then, will the Lord be seen in the mount of blessings for his People, and plagues on his Enemies. Thus you see the Lord hath a Then for his works of justice. And (to digress a little) so he hath also a then for his works of mercy and grace, truth and faithfulness. Yea, the very putting off of his plagues, is of his goodness and Grace. *He is long suffering to us ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to Repentance:* as in the fore-named 2 Pet. 3. 9. But when he seemeth to defer his mercies, he doth it as he doth all things else, according to the Counsel of his will. His will is a wise will, it is guided by Counsell. It is true, his wayes seem sometimes to be full of contradictions, and his promises of delays; But there is a mystery in all Gods workings, which we must learn more and more to understand. The only way is, to delight our selves in him, and we shall (be sure to) have our hearts desire. It is *vox vere Christianorum*, a speech fit to proceed out of the heart and mouth of a Christian,

stian, to say *The will of the Lord be done.*
I am as he is, and my will as his is,
and my times when his are. And be
sure he can as well cease to be God as
miss opportunities to do his People good.
Dauids times are in Gods hands, and *Pha-
raohs* times are in Gods hands. The Lord
hath a Then, a time for every thing, even for
the very falling of a sparrow to the ground.
Voluntas dei necessitas rei, for actions and
circumstances. But to the matter; when the
time is come, then most certainly it shall not
be well with the wicked.

Therefore, it is not good to be careless of *Usc. 1.*
the judgements of the Lord, which you
hear mention of daily. It is good for you
to take warning; otherwise, God may take
you napping in your wickedness. Then no-
thing will profit you in that day. Riches pro-
fit not in the day of wrath, *Prov. 11.4.*
There will a time come when all the riches
in the world shall not do you one half-pen-
nies worth of good. I will read to you *Ezek.*
7. 19. *They shall cast their silver in the*
streets, and their gold shall be removed; their
silver and their gold shall not be able to deli-
ver them in the day of the wrath of the Lord.
They had a Proverb in *Israel*, *The days are*
prolonged, and every vision faileth. But, saith
the

The abuse of the means of Grace

the Lord (you may finde it, *Ezek. 12. 22. 23.*) *I will make this Proverb to cease, and they shall no more use it as a Proverb in Israel; but say unto them. The days are at hand, and the effect of every vision; and ver. 24. For there shall be no more any vain vision nor flattering divination within the house of Israel.* Tis true we have men of learning that are otherwise minded; I would be loth to throw dirt in in any mans face. Men of parts that are godly, we cannot put a price high enough upon. But yet let me tell you, there are some men of great learning, which are the most mischievous men in the world. Take heed of that generation of men, which though they have the teachings of men, yet not of God. These (as *Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses*) do resist the truth, men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith. *2 Tim. 3. 8.* You are much the neerer, sure, to be told fair tales, and to be humoured in your vanity, and at last unawares to be overtaken with the storm of Gods vengeance, while ye are dreaming of fair weather, when both you and your priests fall into the Ditch.

Use. 2. The next use of this point (and therewith I end;) Is it so, that the Lord hath *athen*, when he will assuredly punish, as indeed he he hath; and know (by the way) when God shall

shall cease to be God, then, and not before, shall wickedness unrepented of, go unpunished. Is it so (I say) ? Why then in the fear of God consider and mark that counsel which is given, *Isaiah. 55. 6. 7. 8. 9. &c.* read the words your selves when you come home; I have not time : O seek the Lord, call upon him : O wicked folk, forsake your wayes; O unrighteous men forsake your imaginations. There are in that place great store of Admirable *Motives*, taken from the goodness of God, his readiness to be found, and to pardon; the height of *his* love, and thoughts thereof above *mens* thoughts of love and pity. But to all that is there, let me add what is in my text, *Take him, bind him hand and foot, &c.* Go, get the *Wedding garment*.

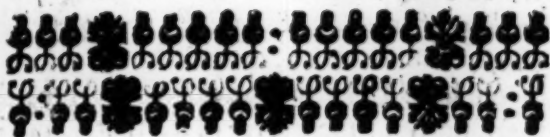
But thou wilt say , *Where is it to be had ?*

I answer ; Go to Christ ; behold he looks for thee ; arise, *he calleth thee.* Say, *I come, Christ ; I come ; Lo I come ;* give power to do what thou commandest, and command what thou wilt; *comprehend me O Christ, that I may apprehend thee.* Resolve never to give over; thou shalt have at last ; For, *he that asketh, receiveth.* How can it be otherwise? He stands at the door and *knocks*, and if thou have

have a heart to open, it is a sign he is gotten into thy heart; *Flesh and blood hath not done it.*

So farr of the circumstances of the sentence.

It remaineth that I should speak of the substance of it; But the time is run out.



The Tenth Sermon.

Matth. 22. 13. 14.

Then said the King unto his Servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darknes; there shall be weeping, and gnashing of teeth. For many are called, but few are chosen.



These verses now read unto you (as hath been formerly shewed) do contain in them, the Commission given by the King, for the execution of that unworthy professor, that was gotten in among Gods People, and had no Grace in his heart: which is the third particular, first noted

noted to be in this last head. viz. *The proceeding of the Lord against the unworthy Guest.*

We have spoken already of his charge, and that, both of the matter of it, that he came into the marriage without a wedding garment; and also of the manner of the Lords dealing with him, calling him friend by an Irony. As if the King should say, *Friend, what make you here? I see you pretend to be one of mine; but how is it that you come in hither not having a wedding garment?*

We have also spoken, Secondly, of his Conviction, and he was speechless.

Thirdly, We have begun to speak of his execution, out of these verses now again read unto you. In which we have noted

First, The Commission it self in the 13. verse.

Secondly, The ground or reason of it, ver. 14.

Again in the Commission, we have observed, and fully handled, the circumstantial part of it; And are now (the Lord assisting) to proceed, and to speak of the substance of the Commission, out of these words, *Bind him hand and foot, &c.*

Wherein two things are set forth.

First,

First, The manner of his punishment: *bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness.*

Secondly, The condition of this poor wretch under his punishment, sad enough, wofull enough, in these words, *There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*

We will begin with the *manner* of his punishment, laid forth under a continued *Metaphor*, taken from the manner of dealing used among men with gross and heynous offenders, who being found *guilty*, are manacled, fettered, and separated from the society of men, and cast into some dark dungeon, there to lie and dye, and never to come out thence again.

Under which words, Christ sets forth the *future* condition of all wicked men and women; to wit, that they shall be cast into *Hell*, where they shall lie *weeping and wayling, and gnashing of teeth*, not only as long as the Sun and the Moon endureth, but as long as God shall be God.

In three degrees of misery, is this punishment of ungodly men here described unto us.

First, *Bind him hand and foot*, that is, Tye him fast, chain him up, let him not escape by any means.

Secondly,

Secondly, *Take him away*, that is, carry him hence from my gracious presence : Let him never see my face more, nor come among my servants ; Let him never sit with my pretious Saints more ; Separate him from the communion and society of my faithfull ones ; *Depart thou cursed cateisse*, (saith God) *thou caredst not for my people, or mine Ordinances, on Earth : and therefore now thou shalt not be troubled with them.*

Take him away, and cast him into outer darknes ; Here is a third degree of misery. Let him go like a Castaway, as he is, as one good for nothing ; cast him away : For men do not use to cast that away which is good for any thing. But here is an aggravation of this third degree of misery, *cast him into outer darknes*, that is, into Hell. Into (outer) *darknes* ; that is, out from God, and out from his Church ; For, with God is light, and in his Church is light : But out of Gods presence, and out of the Church, is darknes.

Note.

Therefore note by the way , That To be cast out of the Church here, is a degree of that outer darknes that ungodly men shall be cast into hereafter. So some understand Mat. 8. 12. *Many shall come from the East and Calvin. from the West, &c. But the children of the Kingdom*

Kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness ; that is, Gentiles shall become Members of the Church; and the Jews, called the children of the Kingdom, because they were so then, shall be exiled, and cast into a dark and dead frame of Spirit, as usually such are, as are justly excommunicated, if Gods physick work not with them to their humiliation and repentance.

Now, We will gather some short lessons, from these particulars thus opened.

And the first shall be,

*That ungodly men shall not escape punish- Doct.
ment.*

The Reason is, because they are bound as it were hand and foot. God hath ordained Bands and Chains to bind wicked men withal; They are bound with a threefold Cord which is not quickly broken; Besides the Chains and cords, which God binds wicked men withal, to Hell torments, there is a threefold Cord to bind them with in this life.

First, The Cord of Gods Decree. *Jude's Epistle, ver. 4. Who were before of old ordained to this condemnation.* All the men on Earth,

Earth, or Angels in Heaven, are not able to break this Cord. There is also a blessed Cord which the Saints are bound with, *Rom. 8. 30.* *Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them also he called : and whom he called, them also he justified; and whom he justified, them also he glorified.*

The use that we may make of it is to bless God if we find we are not bound with that chain that the wicked are bound with : but with that fore-appointed for the Saints.

The second Cord to bind men, is that, *Mat. 18. 18.* *Whatsoever ye shall bind on Earth, shall be bound in Heaven.* This Church-binding is the second, with which men are bound. And for my part, I would not lie under the just censure of a well-ordered Church, for the whole World.

The reason is, because the Scriptures being true, whom the Church binds on Earth, God binds in Heaven.

There are three acts in this binding; God acts first and last, and the Church in the middle. God acts first in giving rules to his Church to walk by. The Church acts by those rules which God hath given ; and are like *Levi* which knew not father nor mother. And this acting of a Church, carrieth more in it then the reproof of one Godly man,
(though

though a publick Preacher) because of the Authority which the Lord hath given to his Church. And then thirdly, God acts in confirming in Heaven what the Church regularly doth on Earth.

There is in the Church, use of ordinary and common brotherly admonitions and exhortations ; with this Cord the People of God bind one another to the Lord. So, *Heb. 3. 12. Take heed brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it called to day, lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfullness of sin.* And therefore all the People of the Lord should look upon this work as a duty : and when it is performed, it should be looked upon as a mercy from the Lord to tie us closer to him. Besides this, sometimes the unruly are to be warned, and desired to forbear from communicating with the People of God. This is as it were the trial of Leprosie : We usually call it suspension from the Lords Supper : and it hath its use as a cord to bind men to the good behaviour, or to discover their Spirits.

But in the last place, there is excommunication, which is to be done by the officers of the Church, as in the name of Christ, so in the name

Fulk on
1 Cor.
5. Sec. 3.
Rhem. Test.

emipia.

Perk.
Cases of
Conscience.

3. *Quest.*
of the 8.c.

name of the Church and People, to avoid confusion. I had rather call it a binding then a cutting off; Because it is an Ordinance of the Lord to be used for the good of an offending brother. 1 Cor. 5. 5. *That the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.* And we find that it was so, by Gods blessing to the incestuous Corinthian, 2 Cor. 2. 6, 7. *Sufficient to this man is this punishment (or censure) which was inflicted of many. So that contrary-wise, ye ought rather to forgive him, & comfort him, lest perhaps, such a one should be swallowed up with over much sorrow.* This is a strong Medicine, by which a fallen brother grossly, and that is hardened in his sin, may yet be recovered. And if it do not, then he is thereby bound over to everlasting burnings. Tis true in some sence they are said to be cut off from the Church; namely in a threefold respect.

First, They are excluded from Communion with the Church by the censure of the Church.

Secondly, From God; for what the Church rightly doth on Earth, God doth in Heaven; If the Church bind on Earth, God binds in Heaven, (and so for Loosing also.)

Thirdly, In regard of themselves for a time; they are cut off, because they want the power

power and efficacy of the spirit, untill they be thoroughly touched with repentance, and begin as it were to live again. Take heed ye that are bound with this Cord of God and his Church, and labour to be unbound again.

There is a third Cord, wherewith men are bound. even in this life; and that is the Cord of Conscience; As this unworthy Guest here was bound, he had not a word to say for himself. He was bound hand and foot; he was haltered (as it were) that he could not stirr. So Judas was so haltered with the Cord of his Conscience, that he could not chuse but halter his neck too; *For he went away and hanged himself*, Mat. 27.5. This is a sad Cord when God is pleased to make use of it. O when a mans Conscience shall tell him, *that he hath no part nor portion in this business, that his heart is not right in the sight of God, (as Peter told Simon Magnus, Acts 8. 21.) that he is in the Gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity*: This will be black News to that poor wretch whosoever he be.

Friends, you are crank and merry; but look on this cooling carde; ye are farr on to the having of this sad story told by your consciences to you, that ye are the Enemies of God.

And note hereupon, that men come not to be bound with this Cord by and by : they usually come to a high degree of sin first. They do the same things, and commit the same sins for which they judge others. *They despise the riches of [Gods] goodness, and forbearance, and long suffering; They have hard and impenitent hearts; in a word they sin with a high hand against Conscience; and begin to be careless and fearless and desperately secure: And then commeth this Cord of the Lord, this whip of Conscience; Judas his Cord I may call it. Read 1 Thes. 5. 3. For when they shall say peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them as travail upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape.* Such fellows come in sometimes among the People of God, to make a faction, and to do mischief. *But though hand joyn in hand, the wicked shall not go unpunished. Prov. 11. 21.* But they are bound together to be the Servants of sin, shall be bound with Cords which shall not be broken. It is storied of *Julian* the Apostate, That, after all his wicked behaviour against the Christians, he was strook (in a battle) thorow the left arm, into the short ribbs, with a lance or Javelin : in pulling which out and casting it into the air with his blood, he uttered these blasphemous

blasphemous words (being bound with this Cord of Conscience I am now speaking of) *Thou hast overcome me O Galilean.* Zosimus. lib. 6. cap. 2. and Theod. lib. 3. cap. 25.

The second particular is in these words, *Take him away.* Hence observe,

That it is a great punishment to be separated from God, and from the comfortable society of Gods People. Doctr.

It will be a principal part of the punishment of ungodly men hereafter, to be turned out, to be bid to depart, and get packing from God and his People. *Mat. 7. 23. Depart from me ye that work iniquity.* *Mat. 13. ver. 30. and 41.* The tares must be bound in bundles, that is, as Christ himself expounds it, *the Angels shall gather out of his Kingdom, all things that offend, and them that work iniquity.* They must out of Gods Kingdom, there is no place for them, they must depart. And so *ver. 49.* of that same chap. *The Angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just.* And *Mat. 25. 32.* *And he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth the sheep from the Goats.* and *ver. 41.* *He shall say to them on the left hand, depart from*

me ye cursed, &c. they must depart; upon which place (saith one, whom I heard many years ago) Merhinks, I hear these Cast-aways pleading, and begging, to this effect. O Lord, If we shall not sit down with *Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, in thy Kingdom*; if we shall not sit on thrones; yet let us stand in thy sight, though but at the door, or let us but peep into the presence of thy People. No (saith God) depart, ye shall not see my face, get out of my sight: Ye shall not stand in the congregation of the righteous; Ye scorned them once, ye shall not be troubled with them now; Depart. Yet may these poor wretches say, if we must needs depart thy presence (O God) and be thrust out from thy People; yet remember, we are thy creatures O Lord, and bless us before we go; No (saith God) depart ye cursed: Away with my curse upon your back. Why yet Lord (may they say) send us to some silent Corner, where we may lie only under the *pena damni*, or dissolve us to nothing out of which we were taken. No; that shall not be granted neither, *Depart into fire*. Happy should they be if they might cease to be: but they must depart into hell torments. But is this all. Heare one imaginary petition more to set forth the truth of the future condition of

of ungodly men, *Lord, how long? Lord, how long?* Let it be but a thousand years (may they say) or if that cannot be obtained, yet but as many years as there be stars in heaven, drops in the Sea, sands on the shore or under the Seas; and let us come out then. No; It is *everlasting fire*. (O rocky heart tremble!) But yet once more. Must we depart, and be accursed, and be in fire, and that eternally? Yet Lord (may they say) let us have a little good company to help wear along that which shall be without end. No; *Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire prepared for the Devil and his Angels*. Ye could not abide good company when ye lived on earth; ye shall have Devils instead of them now. God shall be glorified in his Saints, *because they received his testimony*: but ye would not; therefore ye must not be their Companions. Ye accounted them a burden to you, the off-scowring of all things; ye would not joyn with them, ye cast them out of your Counsels, not only wickedly, but unjustly, yea against all reason: Now ye shall never have the comfort, honour, or happiness to see one of their faces more. Devils, and Reprobates (such as your selves) shall be your companions, for the increase of your eternal torture and torment.

A

A word for application of this second particular from the word (*depart.*) We may learn how to judge of them that have hearts separated from Gods People and ways now; they are in *Simon Magus* his condition, mentioned *Acts* 8.21. Wicked men are the men of their delight; and this is their punishment already, and will bring the other mentioned in the Text; they shall be taken away, and cast away; which is the next, *viz.* the third degree of misery in the punishment of ungodly men.

Doctr.

Learn therefore, *That all wicked men, are a company of Cast-aways, a sort of good-for-nothings.*

All that have not made God their portion, nor have the Spirit of the Son, are good for just nothing: and therefore, as that which is nought-worth, they shall be cast away.

They themselves, and all that they possess, though never so much, are under a Curse, and shall be made to drink the water of jealousy. *Riches avail not in the day of wrath, Prov. 11.4.* They are curses to a wicked man, who is an accursed Cast-away. *Cursed in the City, and in the Field; in his basket, and in his store,*

in

in the fruit of his body, and of his land, the increase of his kine, and the flocks of his sheep. Cursed when he cometh in, and cursed when he goeth out. Cursing vexation, and rebuke shall follow him in all that he setteth his hand unto. Dent. 28. 16. to the 21. ver.

For, A graceless man (to use a Country phrase) is an unlucky fellow. It is a blessing properly to a godly man, that whatsoever he doth, it shall prosper, *Psal. 1. 3.* Again, a graceless man makes the naked creature (without an eye to the Creator) the foundation of his happiness; like a foolish man that hath great store of birds in his field, and because they have pitch'd in his field, he accounts them all his, not considering that they will rise and fly away, when he comes neer to them to take them.

So will all that wicked men have, wherein they put their confidence; when God comes to have to do with them, it will appear that they, with all that they have, are good for nothing but to be cast away.

But yet, Please your self With your notions (may some say) as long as you will. These nothings as you call them, and these cast aways, are often in great prosperity, When the godly and happy (so called) are in adversity.

I answer, This was indeed Davids temptation, Sol.

tation, *Psal. 73. 12.* Behold these are the ungodly who prosper in the world; they increase in riches; and hath formerly been, and at this present is, even mine also; the shameless impudency, and yet continued prosperity of some among you, are both so continued: yet truly I do believe that Adversity is never truly evil, nor prosperity truly good. For wicked men should not have any prosperity, if it were good, nor righteous men adversity, if it were truly evil. Here now is a place for faith, and blessed is he that believeth, *Luke 1.*

Object. But yet sometimes wicked men are employed by God for the good of his Church, as Cyrus was, &c. Therefore they are not altogether good for nothing, or cast away.

Sol.

I answer; God makes use of Devils sometimes (as of wicked men) for his own glory. But my meaning is, that no good shall ever come to themselves by any thing that they do, *Isa. 10. 12.* Wherefore it shall come to pass, that when the Lord hath performed his whole work upon Mount Zion, and on Jerusalem; I will punish the fruit of the stout heart of the King of Assyria, and the glory of his high looks. So this is the sum of all; Let wicked men do what they will, or seem to be usefull to others never so much, or be made use of

of by God (as sometimes they are) yet they shall never do themselves good; they are Cast-aways, they shall be like the chaff which the wind driveth away, &c. *Psal* 1. 4. And nothing that they have shall prosper with them. And at last they shall be cast away quite from God, & all (even) seeming happiness into outer darkness, which is the punishment it self, and comes now to be spoken of. *Cast him into outer darkness, that is into Hell-fire, everlasting fire, as it is called. Matth.* 19. 8, 9.

Hereupon a Question may be moved, how Hell, where there is said to be fire, can be a place of darkness, seeing it is the property of fire to give light; and light and darkness are contrary.

To which I answer, that the place of torment, prepared for the reprobate, hath in the Scripture divers names in divers respects; as in regard of the grievous pain there to be endured, it is often compared to fire; so *Matth.* 13. 42. *And shall cast them into a furnace of fire:* and *Luke* 16. ver. 23. The rich man is said to be in hell in torments: and ver. 24. *to be tormented in the flame.* And the wrath of God, to be poured on the damned in Hell, is so vehemently and frequently set forth by fire, as that many both ancient and

Divers respects.

Fire.

and latter do hold and write, that there is a corporal and visible fire there; *Augustine, Jerome, Ambrose, Chrysostom, Gregory, Tertullian, Lactantius, Cyprian, &c.* And that the visible fire of Hell shall after the day of judgement, punish the damned corporally and eternally, without quenching it self, or consuming them. *Bilson.*

Darkness.

Metaphorice autem per tenebras Scriptura horrendum maiorem designat, &c. Calv.

But I waye this. In regard of the uncomfortableness of a Hellish condition, it is compared to darkness, yea to outer darkness, which is most remote from light. *Calvin* upon *Matth. 8. 12.* saith, that by darkness, Metaphorically, the Scripture understands horrid sadness, which neither in words can be expressed, nor in perception comprehended in this life. For in that place there is a comparing of the sad condition the *Jews* should be in (upon Gods departure from their Nation) with Hell; and they are threatened with outer darkness, that is, unspeakable sadness, in allusion unto Hell. And so in Scripture light is taken for joy and fulness of consolation: as *Psal. 97. 11.* Light is sown for the righteous; and gladness for the upright in heart. And Heaven is said to be the inheritance of the Saints in light.

But I hasten to the Doctrine, and this it shall be;

That

That unspeakably unconceivably, sad and Doctr. wofull will the state of all ungodly men be after death.

It must needs be so; for God will sute *Reason.* mens condition to their frame of spirit, and dispositions here. Outer darkness for lovers of darkness; for so are wicked men, *John 3, 19, 20.* Men are said there *to love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil.* Outer darkness for workers of darkness; so wicked works, are called works of darkness. *Rom. 13. 12.* *Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness.* And the unfruitfull works of darkness. *Ephes. 5. 11.* *And have no fellowship with the unfruitfull works of darkness.* And outer darkness for the children of the Prince of darkness.

And so on the contrary side, they that are the children of *light* here, shall be the inheritors of light hereafter. They that love light here, shall enjoy light there: For there shall be a suitableness of condition to the frame of Spirit and conversation here.

So the Doctrine is evident, That sad and sorrowfull enough, will be the estate of wicked men, that live in darkness here, because it will be their portion hereafter.

And

Use 1.

And therefore in the first place let it teach us, That their condition must needs be miserable, that are now the children of darkness. The *Egyptian* palpable darkness (mentioned, *Exod. 10. 21. even darkness which might be felt*) is no way comparable to the condition of the damned. So that if there were no other thing, but this disconsolateness, and privation of God and all good, this *pœna damni*: wofull will be the estate of wicked men, that depart this life in the dark estate of unbelief, or live here in the darkness of sin and wickedness, or are in darkness any other way.

Use 2.

I would advise you (God own it for his mercies sake) to take heed (as ever you look or desire to escape this separation from light and comfort into outer darkness :) that ye take heed of all those other darkneses in this life which are the forerunners of that. Particularly, take heed of living in the darkness of ignorance. The soul without knowledge cannot be good. Take heed of the darkness of unbelief, *He that believeth not, shall be damned. He that hath not the Son, hath not life*; nor never shall; he is in darkness; he receiveth not the record that God gave of his Son. Take heed of the darkness of sin, of the works of darkness, of the unfruitfull

Prov.

Matk 16.

1 Joh. 5.

v. 12.

Rom. 13.

12.

Eph. 5. 11.

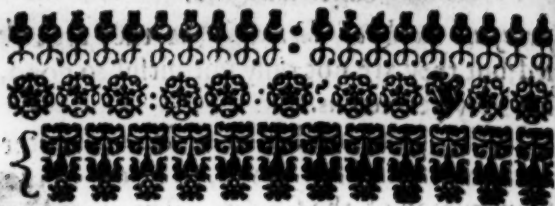
fruitfull works of darkness, as they are called; but they are not only unfruitful to good, but very pernicious.

Lastly, Take heed of that state of outer darkness in this life, to wit, to be out of the Communion of the Church. They that live not in fellowship with Gods Church on Earth, are not like to live with them in Heaven. This is down-right; weigh it well. weigh it the more, because the way is full of errors that leadeth to death.

You shall have what remains, in the
Afternoon:

Q

The



The eleventh Sermon.

Matth. 22. ver. 13. the latter part.

*There shall be weeping and gnashing
of teeth.*



He Point that we were in
handling, was, The sub-
stance of the Commis-
sion given for the execu-
tion of this unworthy
Guest, as it is in this 13.
ver. We have noted two

things therein.

First, the manner of his punishment.

And

And Secondly, The condition of the man punished.

The former hath been dispatched in the forenoon. And many short notes have been given you of it.

As 1. That ungodly men shall not escape punishment, from the words, *Bind him hand and foot.*

2. That it is a punishment to be separated from God, and from the comfortable society of his People; From these words, *and take him away.*

3. That all wicked men are a company of Cast-aways; From these words, *Cast him out.*

Fourthly, That unspeakably, unconceivably sad and wofull with the condition of ungodly men be after death; From these words, *outer darkness. Cast him into outer darkness.*

Now it remaineth, that something be spoken of the condition the Party punished should be in under this punishment; or a description of the place into which he was cast, which is here intimated to be a place of *weeping and gnashing of teeth.* The former words of the verse, do but set forth the punishment of loss, but this the punishment of sense. *Weeping* doth usually attend upon pain,

*Parsdam-
ni, poena
sensus.*

Q2

sorrow

The torments of Hell very grievous!

Sorrow, calamity ; but *gnashing of teeth*, imports great tribulation, and anguish. That sorrow which is set out by *gnashing of teeth*, is a great sorrow. It shews great torment, agonies, and pains to be the portion of ungodly men. This little portion remained intended for the forenoon ; but time prevented the delivery of it then. Therefore take it now in these words,

Docr.

The torments which wicked men shall endure in the world to come , will be very grievous and terrible.

This point is evident from the effects thereof, *weeping and gnashing of teeth*. And we have other places besides the Text to make good the Point ; which I will read unto you.

As first, *Matth. 13. 50.* *And shall cast them into a furnace of fire ; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.* *Cap. 25. 30.* *And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness ; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.* *Luke 16. 23.* *And in Hell he lift up his eyes being in torment.*

Reas. 1.

And it must needs be so ; For first, *They shall be rewarded according to their works of disobedience, and hardness of heart and impenitency.*

penitency. Rom. 2. 4. to the 7. ver. *God will render to every man according to his deeds.* The weight of this reason lies upon the justice of God: who can as well cease to be, as forbear to torment unto eternitie all ungodly men.

The torments of the Damned must needs be great in Hell, because there they shall have the full vials of Gods wrath poured out upon them. *Isa. 30. 33.* For Tophet is ordained of old, yea for the King it is prepared, he hath made it deep and large: the pile thereof is fire and much wood; the breath of the Lord like a stream of brimstone doth kindle it. The Lord here doth but fight with little parties, but then he will bring up all his Forces. That's the day of wrath, and of the revelation of the righteous judgement of God: you have those expressions, *Rom. 2. 5.* And likewise there in the same verse, you have this phrase of *treasuring up of wrath*, by hardness and impenitency of heart. All those expressions are very significant. Gods Justice here is covered; clouds and darkness are round about him, though *righteousness and judgement be the habitation of his throne*: but then there will be a discovery, a revelation of Gods justice. A man would think this were somewhat, and sufficient to discover God: the

D. Preston,
All things
come a-
like to all.
Psa. 97. 2;
drowning

Q 3

drowning of the old World, the burning of Sodom, and the other Cities of the Plain, the killing of so many thousands at several times of his people in the wilderness (insomuch that of six hundred thousand only *Joshua* and *Caleb* were left alive to go over *Jordan*) the drowning of that glorious Army of six hundred chosen chariots, and all the chariots of Egypt, and captains over every one of them. *Exod. 14.7.* What do I talk: time would fail me to relate the terribleness of God in punishing sinners, the examples are so many in Scripture, & have been in all Ages; and yet all this is nothing in comparison of that day of the revelation of the righteous judgement of God. Here God maketh use of some particular judgements; but there the full vials of his wrath shall be poured out.

Thirdly, that torment must needs be great where there is no ease, no intermission, and of which there shall be no end. Not so much as one drop of water to cool the burning tongue of the rich man in hell, &c. *Luk. 16. 24, 25.* he is tormented, and there is a gulf fixed; out of hell there is no redemption, *Matth. 25. 46.* And these shall go their way into everlasting punishment, *Mark 9. 43, 44.* The fire shall never be quenched, the worm dieth not. Here men are partakers of many of Gods
gracious

gracious Vouchsafements, even such as are his enemies. *God causeth his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.* Though his Plagues upon Pharaoh were many and grievous, yet they were numbred and ended, and there were intervals, and respits. Here God doth not always chide, neither keepeth he his anger for ever. But then God will always chide, and will keep his anger unto all eternitie.

Math. 5.
45.
Psal. 103.
v. 9.

Fourthly, it must needs be, that the torment of ungodly men must be inconceivably great; because there must be a perfection or rather a finishing and consummating of all things. All irregularities are ordered by the God of wisdom and justice, to such ends as shall be in the utmost end for his greater glory. Every thing keeps crying and moving, and seeking to be perfected. As trees and plants though they move not out of their places, as men and beasts do, yet they spread their Roots to get nourishment. And gracious men run to and fro that their knowledge may be increased: and they are always *thirsting for God, even for the living God*, because he is their life; and their perfection: and untill they come to his right hand, *where there is fulness of joy, &c.* they will not be quiet. And so the ambitious man hath never

4.

Psal. 42.
ver. 2.
Psal. 16:
v. 11.

honour enough, nor the covetous man wealth enough : So neither sin punishment enough untill these times of wrath, and revelation of Gods justice, and the perfection of sin (I know it is a harsh expression) but this is true of all things, that they strive to, and cry after their compleating. And this proves perfection in God, because in him there is no motion in regard of his glorious essence. But yet he made all things for himself, even the wicked to perish in the *evil day* ; and therefore it must be so; the fulness of Gods wrath must be poured out in hellish torments; else sin shall not attain its end ; beloved there is ^{pe-} an end of the Work, and of the Worker : ^{ope-} though sinners intend not their damnation, yet *the wages of sin is death*, Rom. 6. 23.

And now we come unto the application of this point, of the greatness and intolerableness of Hell fire.

1. And first it shall be to inform us, and that in a checking manner (for according to the homely proverb, It is better fear a Knave then kill a Knave) I shall endeavour to fire ye out of your strong holds of sin, as *Judas* adviseth, 23. *ver.* of his Epistle. Others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire. I say, this is to teach us, that ungodly men have no cause to be so jocund as they be. O they

they that tear it out in whole cloth (as we use to say) in the ale-bench corner, and are ready to throw the house out at window, and let *Psalm. 50.* their tongue walk through the earth: little do they think what is a brewing for them. *O consider this ye that forget God, lest he tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver you.* All that befalls wicked men in this life, are but Gods warning peices: but in this day of Weeping and gnashing of teeth, ye shall know what belongs to Gods murthering peices. It would do ye no harm (O ye wicked great ones,) to read *Amos 6.* from the 1. ver. to the 8. There is a woe in that place pronounced to them *that are at ease in Sion, and trust in the mountain of Samaria: and so did put farr away the evil day, and cause the seat of violence to come neer, &c.* And yet all that is there threatned, is but their going into Captivity, with the first, (that is speedily) and the removal of their banquet, though they had stretched themselves for it, *ver. 7.*

But Alas! What comparison is there between the punishment of a temporal captivity, and the torments of Hell (where most assuredly the Sparks and the Brutes of our times shall be brought)? Even no more then between painted fire, and fire indeed. Ye will not come neer Gods People now, the time

Luk. 16.
ver. 23.

time shall come, when ye shall see them afar of (as *Dives* saw *Abraham* afar of ; and *Lazarus* in his bosome) and shall wish with all your heart that ye might come among them, and might be no longer tormented in that hellish flame. And let such as laugh at Gods word now, know, they shall weep out of his presence then. Woe be to you that laugh now; for ye shall mourn and weep;

Use. 2.

Luk. 6. 25.

Mot.

The Second use is of exhortation. Take heed that ye come not into this place of torment. I say take heed, and provide a hiding place from this storm. Consider, we desire to avoid bodily griefs and pain, Headaches, Toothaches, Agues, &c. If we be wise for the lesser, shall we be fools for the greater? There is reason (one would think) that we should be wise for our souls, and the things that do concern eternity.

Quest.

But how shall we do to avoid these torments, and this place of weeping and gnashing of teeth?

Ans^r.

I answer, Take heed of unbelief, and disobedience. Heb. 3. 12. *Take heed brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. Cleave to God by faith, labour to be obedient: for these practices shew that thou art escaped; and also love of the brethren.*

The

The thing that I shall chiefly press, is, that ye would accept of the gracious offers of Christ, while they are going. Take heed that ye be not hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. I do not teach you, that you can avoid and escape the wrath of God by your doings; but this I say, the work is done to your hand; accept of Gods love, and Christs merits, and all shall be well; *He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved.* Mark. 16. 16. What should keep from believing? ye have a commandment to believe; and ye have a promise, *That he that believeth shall be saved.*

But may some say, All shall not be saved, Object.
all are not elected; therefore some are commanded to believe a lye: for if they be commanded to believe that Christ died for them, and he did not (as he did not if they belong not to Gods election) then they are commanded to believe a lye.

Sol.
For solution and satisfaction, most certainly, every one that believes in the Lord Jesus, and takes Christ offered in the Gospel, shall be saved by him. He that believes Christ died for him, believes no lye, but a truth. And it is a sin not to believe. And *John 5. 40.* Christ complains of the Jews that they would not come to him that they might have life.
They

*voluntas
approbati-
onis & ef-
fectionis.*

They that do not believe shall be damned, they have made God a lyer, and their damnation is of themselves. But yet, as there is Gods will of Precept; so there is his will of working; and he will call in all his elect. The Command of the word we ought to look after; and so to do, is a sign of salvation. 2 Thes. 1. 10. When he shall come to be glorified in his Saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony was believed among you) in that day.

Here we have to deal with two sorts of People.

First, The prophane multitude; these say they have had a strong faith from their childhood.

But let us talk with them a little. What Demonstration can ye make of your faith? Have ye a Mean or medium. We will help you to one out of the 2 chap. of James, and that is Works, this will be a demonstration of the Cause by the Effects; *If thou have faith, shew it, make it out, by thy works, by thy carriage, and conversation. Love to the Saints will be another notable Mean or medium to make out a mans faith in Christ.*

Therefore it is that they (to wit, the Cause and the Effect) are joyned together often, as Col. 1. 4. *Since we heard of your faith in Christ,*
and

and of the love which ye have to all the Saints.

If good People be your delight, and good men the men of your counsell; if you can say

with David, that ye have not sate with vain persons, &c. If ye account religious persons

(as Christ did) as your Brethren, and Sisters, and Mothers; Why then hereby ye may demon-

strate your passage from death to life, and that ye are born of God and know God. And

so these two Means or mediums will help ye well, if ye wil be true to yourselves. If ye have

a respect to all the Commandments; there's

one. And if ye have love to all the Saints, that's the other. And therefore Soul, deceive

not thy self any longer. If thou have neither an obedient frame of Spirit to do Gods

will, nor love to the People of God, thou hast no faith. *Shew me thy faith.* But you

will say, God knows my heart; what care I for you? I will not give an account to you.

Yea but I say, thou are bound to give an account to me, and to every man that asketh a

reason of the hope that is in thee, and that with meekness and reverence or fear. 1 Pet. 3. 15.

But poor neighbours, it is plain, you have no faith in Christ; for ye are rebellions against

the Lord, and despisers of his People. The Lord pittie ye, and soften your hearts, that

ye may escape the wrath to come.

Psal. 26!

1 John 3.

ver. 14.

chap. 4.

ver. 7.

The

The other sort I have to deal with all, are such poor Souls, as out of holy and blessed jealousie, are ready to condemn themselves, and to give sentence against themselves, and indeed against the truth. They know not whither ever they believed, they are afraid they have not. Never went a soul to hell that feared the want of faith, and breathed after it. Mat. 5. 3. and 6. *The poor in spirit, and the hungerers and thirsters, &c. are pronounced blessed.*

But you have said, Faith must have its demonstrations.

I answer, So they must, and so they have in thee, even in this thy emptiness, and jealousie, and groaning frame of spirit; O these groaning Souls are blessed Souls. Such a one was Paul. Rom. 7. ver. 14. to the end of the Chapter. Have a care; yeild not up your Castle, however it be with you, in your present apprehension. Learn of Christ, who though he cried, (*why hast thou forsaken me?*) Yet held fast his relation (*my God my God,*) Never disown God; that the Devil would have.

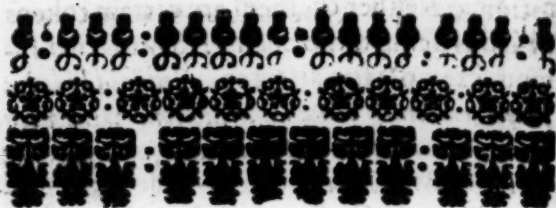
There are but three things, all that may seem to be just causes so to do, as, 1. Descriptions. 2. Great afflictions. 3. Great sins. Yet bear up against them all neither of them

is a Medium sufficient to conclude thy damnation. Neither of them are certain tokens of Gods being thine Enemy. *David* is a famous example for all three. *God* did hide his face from him. And his afflictions were very many. And what sins in a Saint, comparable to his? And *Peter* denied, and did aggravate it with Cursing and Swearing, that he knew not Christ. To despair after a fall, is a greater fall then the fall. The main push, is, that perhaps thou hast sinned after knowledge. So did those two Worthies, and yet they died in peace and honour. We must fortifie our selves after Relapses especially; yet a man may fall into the same gross sin after true repentance, as *Abraham* twice laid his wife open to adultery. But still hold fast by God, thou must be bold.

Calvin.
Perkins.
Capel.
of tentati-
ons. p.
124.

The end of the 13. verse.

The



The Twelfth Sermon.

Mat. 22. ver. the 14.

For many are called, but few are chosen.

NExt to the Commission for the execution of the unworthy Guest (of whom ye have heard often, formerly) followeth the ground or reason of it : *viz*, that howsoever this (condemned) man came into the Church by reason of an outward

outward call; yet he was none of Gods chosen ones, he was not of the number of Gods elect (as neither are many others (though called outwardly (as he was) to the profession of religion) because , *many are called, but few are chosen.*

But some may Object, (and indeed I find Object. such a question in Mr. Calvin. upon this Parable) If all be bid to come, and yet when men come they shall be rejected, and cast out for lack of a wedding garment : then who shall be saved ? or is it in mans power to procure it himself?

To this I answer, that the Holy Ghost, intends not here to shew whence the garment is to be had, (for he that invites to the marriage, cloaths also. *Ezek. 16. 7 and 10. v.*) But the scope is, to shew that such as are found in their sins, shall perish; not that the garment of righteousness and Salvation is to be found in any mans own Chest. God finds nothing in us, but miserable nakedness and filthiness: Neither are we any otherwayes reformed unto the image of God, but as we put on Christ. Therefore (I say) here is not a discovery or Doctrine of mans power to cloath himself; but of Gods Method in the work of conversion; who worketh that in the elect, which he commandeth

R

men

men to have. See Calvin in *Isai. 1. ver. 16.* His words are these as they are translated. *Now we know that the spirit of God is wont to attribute that to men, which himself works in them, who is therefore said to pour clear water,* Ezek. 36. 25. Because repentance is a worke proceeding from him. So that (I say-) if God that bids you come to Christs wedding, do not give you a wedding garment, it is a sign you are not one of his elect or chosen ones; For all are not that are called; *For many are called, but few are chosen.*

Now for the sence of the words; We are by called ones here to understand, not such as are effectually called, (as in sundry places the word is taken; among others, *1 Cor. 1. 24.* where the Gospel is said to be the power of God unto called ones;) but here by being called, is meant only a partaking of an outward call; to wit, to hear of such a one as Christ was, and to joyn outwardly with Christians; either according to Law (I mean mans Law,) or according to custom, or the practice of our forefathers; (of which called ones, the greatest part, are but a rude heap of baptized Pagans and Infidels) or else, such as are Temporaries and Hypocrites, that have some common works of the Spirit,

Spirit; some fear of Hell, some tast of the powers of the world to come: and yet are found to be reprobate silver. True it is, that such as are inwardly and effectually called, are likewise so called, and ought to joyn themselves with Gods People, and Will: But yet this is the summe, that many are so called outwardly, that yet shall perish everlastingly. The Next word to be expounded is the word (*chosen, few are chosen*) Whether we understand hereby choice ones, approved ones (as some expound the word) or else Gods election in Christ before all time, of some to be vessels of grace (which yet in my poor opinion, may rather be called a purpose of election, then election it self:) I say understand it either way; Tis plain the meaning of the Holy Ghost, is, That among the Multitudes of People that are by general profession Christians, there are but few choice plants, *chosen of God and pretious*, which indeed none are but such as God hath predestinated unto the adoption of children, by *Jesus Christ unto himself*, according to the good pleasure of his will. Eph. 1. 5. And this election from everlasting, is called Gods purpose and grace (and said to be) *given us in Christ Jesus before the world began*, 1 Tim. 1. 9. And none but such (though outward-

ly called ones) shall ever be fitted, and trimmed to go in unto the marriage of the Lamb, and to be bid wellcome there.

From this *verse* thus opened and expounded, I shall observe three short points of Doctrine, and briefly handle them at this time, and so end my Sermon, and this whole Parable.

Doctr. That many by preaching partake of an outward Call.

1.

2.

That few of those are elected and chosen of God, or truly choice and pretious here by the working of the Holy Ghost.

3.

That those that are not so ordained of old, and so sanctified by the Holy Ghost (as hath been said) shall perish at last, notwithstanding their outward call, and profession of religion. For (saith the Text) many are called, but few are chosen. Of these in order.

Reason. And first of the first of them, viz. that many partake of an outward Call. For both Jews and Gentiles partake thereof, as hath been already shewed out of this parable. The whole world consists of two sorts of People; all the world are to be invited one time or other. The Jews from the time of Abraham unto the dissolution of their state. Then for the Gentiles you have *Mat* 28. 19. *Mark* 16. 15. *Rom.* 10. 18. All Nations must be

be taught. Every creature must be preached unto The sound of the Gospel must go out into all lands. The general coming of people to the Ordinances is compared to the calling of Swine & pigs to the mangle mangle, Come pyr, come pyr to the mangle mangle. So it hath been (the more the pitty) in our time ; and is yet where unhallowed Ministers have to do. Surely all that are admitted in the best Societies of Christians are not certainty sound.

For the first use, we may learn that the preaching of the Gospel is no hidden thing. *Use I.* It is preached to a multitude, and must be ; how else shall they be converted ? *It must be made known to all Nations for the obedience of faith.* Rom. 16. 26. The preaching of the Gospel must not be too much restrained, The World must hear of Christ. Some there are that preach very sweetly to Saints in private places ; there may be a time for that. But there must be a time to tell all the World that Christ died for sinners ; *that he that believeth not, shall be damned ; that Tophet is prepared of old &c.* Some blame Ministers for that they preach *Moses* too much. Beloved, let *Moses* go first ; by the Law cometh the knowledge of sin ; But let Christ follow after ; *For the Law is a killing Letter, the*

Gospel is the grace of God which bringeth Salvation. Jude saith, difference must be made; of some (indeed) we must have Compassion: but others must be saved with fear, and pulled out of the fire, ver. 22. and 23. of that Epistle. Though sometimes our words must distill as the rain, and drop down as the dew; yet there must be fire, and a hammer, to break the rock in pieces.

But it may be objected, The Gospel is a hidden treasure. Mat. 13. 44. And a mystery, and hidden wisdom. 1 Cor. 2. 7.

I answer, Not in regard of the outward means; for it is openly to be revealed, as before was noted out of Rom. 16. 25. 26. but because of the blindness of mans understanding, because the natural man cannot discern it. 1 Cor. 2. 14. Because the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them 2 Cor. 4. 4. But the blame is in men, and it is to them a sign of perdition; for, If our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost, saith Paul, in the 3. verse of the forementioned chapter, and Epistle to the Corinthians.

And so much for the first use, or first branch (rather) of the information.

Secondly,

Secondly, Then great is Gods mercy and favour to multitudes, in regard of the means of grace vouchsafed ; and although many shall perish that live under them ; yet that the means of Salvation is vouchsafed to them, is a rich mercy. *Use 2.*

And therefore take heed how ye abuse this mercy; improve it to your benefit ; For otherwise, you will have the greater damnation ; you will have it with a vengeance ; Your having of it, will be an aggravation of your punishment ; as it is said to *Capernaum* *Mat. 11. 23.* *And thou Capernaum, which art exalted unto Heaven, shalt be brought down to Hell.* It will be so far from being enough to you, to enjoy the outward Call, that it will be easier for them that never heard of it, at last. *Use 3.*

And so I come to the second Doctrine, *That few are chosen, or choice ones of those many to whom the sound of the Gospel cometh.* *Mor.*

If there were found a *Judas*, among but twelve, and that of Christs own choosing ; Then a thousand to one but some of you that sit here this day, will be damned. O consider this, look to your selves; Search your hearts; do as the Disciples did, when their Master told them one of them should betray him, they began to enquire, *Master, is it I? Master, is it I?* O if any of you should fall under that

R 4

sentence,

sentence, *Go ye cursed*; good had it been for you, if ye had never been born.

Reason.

Now the Reason thereof, *viz.* why so few of many are chosen, is, because there are few that are effectually wrought upon, even of those that hear the word. The seed of Gods word is sown, but most sorts of ground are naught. *Mat. 13. ver 3. to the 9.* And so *Rom 10. 16. 17. They have not all obeyed.* All said I! Nay of four sorts of ground there is but one good, as ye may see in the forementioned place of *Matthew.* We read in Scripture, of *Ananias* and *Saphira* his wife, of *Simon Magus*, of *Demas*, of *Hymeneus* and *Alexander* (perhaps the same *Alexander* mentioned afterward to be the Copper-smith, who did *Paul* much wrong. *2 Tim 4. 14.*) all professors, but stark naught. Nay even in the small company of prophets, in the *Jewish Church*, see what the most were, to wit, *blind watchmen*, *dumb doggs*, *greedy doggs*, *drunken swine*, *Isai. 56. 10. 11.* And what a generation of *Vipers* were there among the *Jews*? *Mat. 3. 7.* And *Mat. 23. 33. Ye serpents* (saith Christ) *ye generation of Vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of Hell?* And also *Acts 7. 51. Stiffnecked ones* (as *Steven* called them,) *uncircumcised in heart and ears, such as did alwayes resist the Holy Ghost.* And so

Acts. 5.

Acts. 8.

2 Tim. 4.

10.

1 Tim. 1.

20.

in

in *Moses* his time, *Korah*, *Dathan* and *Abiram*, men of renown, and famous in the congregation. *Numb 16. 1. 2.* A *Zidkijah* against *Michajah*. *1 Kings 32. 24.* *Azariah the Son of Hosbajah*, and *Johanan the Son of Kareah*, and a knot of other proud men more, that give the Lords prophet (as it were) the lye. *Thou speakest falsely* (quoth they) *thou art angred by Baruch the son of Neria*. *O many are called, but few are chosen.* I need go no further then our own Town for proof hereof; the Lord grant that it may be thought upon. Vain therefore is the conceit of universal grace: they that are elect in respect of the rest of the world are few. *Salvation depends not on him that wil- leth, nor on him that runneth, but on Gods ele- ction.* Vocation followeth prædestination (I speak now of effectual vocation.) *Rom 8 30.* The knowledge of election, (indeed) is disco- vered upon the receiving of the Gospel, and following of the Apostles. *1 Thes. 1. ver. 4. 5. 6. 7.* but not the being of it. It was from everlasting, and is a cause of receiving Christ, not an effect thereof. We have a willfull sort of free-wil men risen up, Grace-destroy- ing men, Christ-headers, that separate him from his body, (the Church) the members whereof (even every one) were written in Gods book from everlasting. He had a body given him for whom (as well as with which) he must die. Use 1.

And

+ And how (secondly) are they deceived, that think it enough to be born in Christian Lands, and to perform outward actions of religion; and to buy for their babies twelve penniworth of water to sprinkle their faces (or sometimes it will cost a couple of shillings when these tails of men, and scumme of the country come a mile further then ordinary) I tremble to think how this sealing Ordinance is abused, prophaned, even every week almost, by these Empyricks, and vagrant Mountebancks, who are not afraid. notwithstanding God hath pluckt so many of them out by the ears in our dayes. O when God shall come to make a search in our town; for his choice ones that have the mark of election upon them; I fear, I fear, what will become of the most of you that hear me this day.

I will name you, but four sorts, look to your selves.

First, The notorious evil liver; the rascals, of which we have (I cannot say good, but) great store in every street in the Town. Enemies to God and all good men, enemies to the State and all the blessed proceedings thereof: men indeed, fitter to be dealt with all with stripes then words; but that God is able to make words (and sometimes doth so) to break (not only bones) contrary to the common

common

common proverb) but also hearts.

Secondly, we have some civil honest people, that have a little exactness that way; and this makes a great show in a Country-Church (as we say;) all the world shall not put them off from their good conceit of themselves.

Thirdly, but if they come to be conformable to the outward prescriptions for Religious performances, and to pen a Sermon, or to be (as now we phrase it) a Member of a Church: why then they are made for ever. And yet such may be as far from happiness as the worst of men.

There are lastly, A great heap of high-flown Apostates, back-sliders from grace, that shew they were never *chosen of God and precious*, by their *turning with the dog to their vomit, and with the Sow that Washed to her wallowing in the mire*. O the fearfull doings of our glorious times, in these unglorious carriages. But the Devil is Gods Ape; when God pours out great measures of his Spirit, he hath his store of delusions to deceive if it were possible the very elect No marvell then so many flie off; *For many are called, but few are chosen*, or elected.

In the third place, it concerns every one to try and examine himself, whether besides *Use 3.*
an outward profession and generall calling, there

there be any evidence of Election by an effectual Vocation. O we must take heed how we rest in an outward Calling. Let no man or woman be content, untill they have found themselves in the number of the Lords chosen ones. A notable place for discovery of it we have 1 *Theff.* 1. v 3. unto the end of the Chapter. O when the word is in power and in much assurance, when there is a working faith, and a labouring love, and a patient hope, and all in sincerity, in the sight of God our Father: when People become followers of the Lord (though much affliction follow:) and do receive the word with joy of the holy Ghost; this is excellent doings; and yet much more might be fetch'd out of that Chapter, had I not other things to acquaint you with. Therefore (to stoop to my poor silly unbred (yet populous) Auditory) I will name some particulars.

Marks of
men cho-
sen of
God.

First, *If you be carefull to amend your ways.*

Secondly, *To seek knowledge.*

Thirdly, *To renounce the World.*

Fourthly, *To feel and resist temptations.*

Fifthly, *To fight against thy flesh.*

Sixthly, *To forsake ill Company.*

Seventhly, *To mourn and pray against special sins.*

Eighthly, *To love Gods children that are the pretious ones, and Gods Jewels.*

Ninth-

Ninthly, To hate Rascals and Atheists with a deadly hatred ; and not only to shun their society (for that may be done for by ends) but to hate the very Garment spotted with the flesh. As Psal 15. In whose eyes a vile person is contemned. Psal. 26. I have not sate with vain persons, &c. Psal. 139, Lord (saith David) do not I hate them that hate thee? And am I not grieved with them that rise up against thee? Yea, I hate them as though they were mine own enemies.

And lastly, Learn the folly of the most-do men of our days. O say men, every body doth it. I say it is an Argument that none but stark buzzards in Religion will use. Gods People (you see plainly out of this Text) are of the number (not of those many that are called only, but) of those few that are chosen. O simple objection against Godly men (yet common) they be like no body. Why it must be so, it is so in the Text. And it becometh all to try whether they be of the little number, sheep of the little flock ; and a mighty Motive to labour in this search, we have next to handle for a Doctrine; it is the third and last, to wit, That they which are not *Doctr.* partakers of an effectual Vocation from Election, must perish notwithstanding their outward calling to the profession of the Gospel.

This

Reason.

This point ariseth from this word (*For,*) which sheweth the ground of the condemnation, that man lay under, that yet was partaker of an outward calling; he was not chosen, he was not elected; therefore it was that he was damned. And the Reason is, because salvation depends upon Gods election, as may be seen, *Rom 8.30. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called, &c. Rom 9 11.12. For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth, it was said (to Rebekah) the elder shall serve the younger. Rom. 11. 7. What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeks for: but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded.*

Use 1.

Now, if it be so, as you plainly see it is then miserable may a mans condition be notwithstanding he enjoy the outward means of grace. If he have not, do not, one time or another, taste of the power of Gods Spirit, it is a sign he is not ordained to life. But because there is no good use to be made of this matter, but to convince, and to stir up to labour for assurance, it will be necessary for me to answer an objection, which is,

Object.

That if God hath not chosen a man in Christ

to be his, it is but in vain to labour for grace;
for it will not be had by any means.

Now I answer. *That secret things belong Sol.*
to God; whose revealed will is, *That not one Joh. 3.14.*
that believeth in Christ shall perish. It is my
duty therefore knowing this, to believe; by
doing whereof, I may safely conclude mine
election. And therefore labor to believe every
one of ye, & *shew your faith by your works.* +

But to return whence I did digress; They
erre that think it enough to live under a
good Ministry; Judas lived under the best
Teacher that ever was. And we finde *Mat.*
7. 21, 22. that many that shall say, Lord,
Lord, shall not enter into the Kingdom of hea-
ven. And further, *many shall say in the last day,*
Lord, Lord, we have prophesied in thy name, and
in thy name have cast out Devils, and in thy
name done many wonderfull works; to whom
yet it shall be said, *Depart from me ye that*
work iniquity.

Secondly, then it must needs be bad with *Use 2.*
them that disclaim Profession, Ordinances,
and the means of grace; he that runneth, may
read their damnation.

Lastly, let us all in earnest fall to enquiry *Use 3.*
about our Election, and make a search for it.
Methinks every one should be carefull about
a business of this concernment. We are care-
full to preserve our lives temporal: much
more

more should we be careful about our life, and to be preserved from eternal destruction.

Quest. But how may a man prove his election of God?
Answ. I Answer, I thewed before out of 1 *Thef.*

1.3. to the end of the Chapter. And further, effectual Vocation is an evident signe of Election, *Rom.* 8. 30. *And the fruits of holiness and righteousness.* 2 *Pet.* 1. ver. 5. to the 11. Faith, love, patience, sincerity, and adhering to Christ; a delighting in the excellent ones. Consider whom dost thou love? whom wouldst thou preserve if it were in thy power? O consider this ye that hate Gods people, that exclude thē what you can (sometimes shamefully, though shamelesly) out of your Counsels for no other reason but because they make conscience of their ways, and the Ordinances of Christ which ye contemn; the time will come when ye shall be excluded. *The ungodly shall not stand in judgement, nor sinners in the Congregation of the righteous.* And let such as have these forementioned graces, rejoyce; they shall grow, and at last come unto a perfect man, *unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.*

ERRATA:

In the Epist. to the Parl. pag. 3. in the Margin insert Mr. I.B. blot if out in the next pag. In the 24. l. of the 3. page for while read untill. In the 6. pag. of the same Ep. for where read whence. In the Margin of the 7. for Merewich read Greenwich. p. 8. l. 2. for sermon r. Sermons. In the book. Pag. 1. the title for Tavistock r. Tavistock. pag. 6. l. 17. for 7. put 2. pag. 51. l. 21. for word r. world. in the 46. p. l. 20. between the two words business (and indeed) insert the word which.

FINIS.

A
Discourse
OF
PAYING
OF
TITHES.

By T.L. M.A.

Pastour of the Church of Christ at
Tavistock in Devon.

Together with an APPENDIX, by
way of Apology for the
seasonableness thereof.

LONDON.

Printed by T.R. & E. M. and are to be sold
by Francis Eglesfield at the signe of the
Marygold in *Pauls Church-yard.*

1656.

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Author's Conduct.

LONDON.

Printed by T. B. A. and are to be sold
by W. B. A. the Sign of the
Angel in Fleet Street.

1792.

TO HIS
Highness
THE
Lord PROTECTOUR
OF
The *Common-wealth* of ENG-
LAND, SCOTLAND,
and IRELAND.

May it please your HIGHNESSE,
HAT Gods Holy Morall
Law may be duly ob-
served, Christian Liberty
not encroached upon, the
inward Man commanded by Trueth,
and Toleration tolerable be tolerated, is
the designe of this short ensuing dis-
course. It had its conception many
A 2 Months

Moneths ago, and was intended for the late Supream Authority of this Common-wealth of England, but now it casts it self before your Highness, whom God hath raised up, and into whose hands, power, and opportunitie are put to bring great designes into action. This is your day to honour him eminently, by whom Kings Reign and Princes decree judgement. The brood of Travellours returned Exlies must be served too for Christ's sake, who is their Lord and yours. That it is a piece of your work to take away Snares that have been spread in the way of Saints, and yet ly unremoved, I humbly suppose you know much better than I can tell. These Lines rightly understood, refin'd, and observed, maybe a Cloud like a Mans hand for further fruitful Rain, that your day may not slip to you, or slide too fast for us, is the prayer of your Highness humble servant,
THOMAS LARKHAM.



CHAP. I.

Containeth the Preface or Introduction.



Tis and hath been often in my thoughts, to communicate mine Apprehensions touching that Ball of Contention, and rock of offence, and snare to tender Consciences, the payment of Tithes, as now they are payable and required by Law of the Inhabitants of Towns and Villages within this Commonwealth. This is looked upon by some as a very great burden to the people of these Nations; and not only so, but as a great Let to the People of God, whereby they are kept from, or disabled in the doing of their

dutie to them that teach them in the Word,
 and in doing good to all, especially to the
 Household of Faith, as Stewards of what the
 Lord hath entrusted them with, especially
 (as some hold) of the Tenth of their Estate
 judged to be the Lords portion by a moral
 Law (though not primarily, as neither is
 the Law of a seventh dayes Sabbath.)

Now (say many) when men are enforced
 to pay Tithes to Nobles, Gentlemen, Col-
 ledges, or such Ministers as are thrust upon
 them by corrupt Patrons or otherwise, and
 whom they cannot look upon as their Pa-
 stours sent of God and set over them regu-
 larly, hereby they are put out of their way,
 and the Lords portion goeth not the right
 way, but is diverted out of its proper chanel
 in the judgment of such as hold Tithes due
 by divine Right, which are not inconfide-
 rable either for number, judgment, and lear-
 ning or piety,

And (say others otherwise judgement) it
 is a burden which we hoped the shedding of
 so much blood and expending such summes
 of money, would long before now have freed

us from, but we are as we were (alas) an old penny for a new, and scarce that. Now I shall humbly propose a few considerations in order to the removal of these inconveniences, and for direction or advice to the giving of content to all considerable Complainants. (being for my part one of them that do judge the Tenth part of Estate, and Seventh of time to be holy to the Lord.) And that those confusions which Antichrist his followers have brought upon the face of the Christian World may be taken away, and Gospel-worship be ordered in moral duties thereunto belonging, according to the will and mind of God and our Father, whose rules we ought to walk by in all observance both to him, and our neighbours. And if this be a truth (which I know no learned Man to doubt of) that the subject matter of Church-admonitions and Proceedings is *Bonum & malum, rectum & iniquum, pius & impius*, that is to say, Good to be observed, and evil to be avoided; why should not Christs own way be walked in for the affecting of these things in his Church, and the particular Con-

gregations thereof throughout the Commonwealth. And if it be a sin even for Magistrates and Sword-men *Uzzab*-like to carry the Ark of God, and pretend to keep it from falling without call and rule; how much more to protect sacrilege, and countenance Antichristian disorders, or at least (as others that are not of my mind hold,) to continue to force the People of God to pay Tithes unto them, that may as well by a civil Law require Bullocks, Goats, and Lambes, &c. for sacrifices, or instead thereof, or any such thing of Religious off-spring from Christians, Jewes or Heathens. We find in the stories of the Church, that this wicked practice of diverting Tithes out of their due course, was first practised by Romane Popes: when they were come to that incorrigible pride and liberty to do all things as they pleased. Then began they by all oppressing power, to grant, first exemptions, and afterward impropriations, transferring Tithes from one to another. And so in proceſſe of time, when all things were ready merchandise for them that brought most, no marvel that the

the portion of the Lord which was to be payd by divine Rule to Church-officers in their particular Congregations, and disposed of by them in relation to the particular charges, were taken from them (as now they are kept from them) and either bestowed upon the Popes kinsmen the lazy Monkes, or else some such as could make best friends with any of the Popes creatures were exempted from paying any thing at all. And upon the dissolution of those irreligious houses, you cannot be ignorant how many filled their Mawes, and rode up to the very Horse bridles into those spoils, when those dens of theeves were routed.

Now because the Lords portion seized upon (as I said before) lay among the devoted things, all was taken together and made good prize. And because 'twas so, it must be so, or else (say our wise Men) Children of these Ancestours & Purchasers of these Tithes will be wronged, if they may not enjoy that which they or their Fathers purchased. But in other things they have a proverb *Caveat Emptor*, and a man may seize on his stolen Horse

Horse wheresoever he find it, and sometimes an honest man may be in danger of his life for buying it, though meaning no harm. Why then should not the Lords portion be rescued, and restored to him? And yet other things I shall briefly lay down in order to the making this good. That Tithes, as now payd are sinfully exacted and received and that the payment of them this way is injurious, burdensome sacreligious, or at least an hinderance to the performance of Christian duty according to Gods Law.

CHAP. II.

The main argument is taken from referring the duty of paying of Tithes unto its proper Law, and here is a short discourse of Lawes.

Concerning Lawes, I will for brevities sake referre them to three Heads: Divine, Civil, Canon. By Canon Lawes I mean the decrees of Councils, which were of great force when the mysterie of iniquitie was grown ripe. By Civil Lawes, I mean Princes Constitutions and Acts of Parliament. Now that Tithes did not receive their

their original from either of these Lawes were very easy to make good. For we find in Histories, that Tithes were more duly, more orderly, and more sincerely payd, before the Canon Law was invented, then ever they were since; and that they were not anciently due by the Civil Law and Princes constitutions till now of late years, is more then evident. And we know how generally Tithes have been held due throughout all the Christian World: And we know no one Prince hath power over all Christian Lands. And therefore it remains that if Tithes be payable at all in Gospel times, it must be by the Law of God; and from it their due must take it's rise.

Now the Law of God is either Moral, Judicial, or Ceremonial: these things are known to every abcedarian in Divinitie. The work next will be to place the paiment of Tithes in its proper form, that we may by help of its proper scituation see the dutie of Princes and Parliaments to help the Lord against the Mightry, and to cause usurping Cefars to let alone that which belongeth to God, and

vidv si alib: ... (6) 10

to take that which is their own. Then will not men be so earnest to keep up Tithes as they are now paialle, nor make such hideous cryes as they do; set a work by such of *Elies* House, as know the Lord hath not owned them, and therefore desire not maintenance in his way.

According to those three sorts of Lawes before-mentioned there are three several opinions among men that are called Christians. The first that I wil speak of as being the newest and weakest, is that Tithes became payble by the Ceremonial Law. Now what is Ceremonial is either so Levitically (which all ceremonies are not, for there was sacrificing and other ceremonies in use before the *Levitical* Order) or else those ceremonies that were so in use before. Now if Tithes be Levitically ceremonial, then before the Levites they had no being or use at all. But if any shall say they were ceremonial before the Law, as sacrifices were in use and ceremonial before they were Levitical, *viz.* before those particular Ordinances for the manner of sacrificing were commanded, and therefore (so) ceremonial, I answer this is very plau-

plausibile and probable, *viz.* that Tithes were ceremonies before the Law as well as sacrifices, and that certain particular Ordinances of paying them to the Levites, or the assignation of them to that worship of God, which was then in use may be called a Levitical constitution. But to make this opinion good ungainstayably, and to make the paying of Tithes, and offering of sacrifices to agree compleately: we must enquire into two things, first the Propriety, secondly the end of both Sacrifices and Tithes. For the first, the propriety of Sacrifices is not the Lords untill they are once offered to him, and till that time he hath the right and propriety in those things, that is about to sacrifice them. But in Tithes man hath no right at all, because they are all the Lords. In Sacrificing man sanctifieth of his own to God, which before offering is his own, and if he should not offer, it remaineth his own still, but paying of Tithes is not a giving but a rendring to God that which was his before: not to sacrifice is ungodliness, not to pay Tithes is injustice also. Therefore forasmuch as a ceremony

mony standeth in giving to God what is a mans own not what is Gods before , paying of Tithes cannot be a ceremony. Secondly if we look to the end of a Sacrifice, it did signifie and type out the great Sacrifice, upon the Crosse, it was a carnal type of that holy Sacrifice , and was to have an end when that should be exhibited (and indeed the end of all ceremonies was to signifie something.) But who can shew such an end of paying Tithes, or indeed any other end then Maintenance of the Ministry before the Law , and under the Law with some particular additional constitutions, and claimed, and challenged in the times immediately succeeding the Apostles, and by the consent of all , or the most Christians yielded to. Tithes were the Lords before he assigned them to *Levi*. *Object.* All things are the Lords. Sol In another sense then Tithes are. All things are the Lords, as he created them, and as by his Power he Rules over all, and as all owe him duty and homage. But Tithes are said to be the Lords in respect of, and by immediate right, more then the other nine parts ; as the Seventh-

venth-day is his more then the other six. We might argue also from the definition of a Levitical ceremonie, and make a long discourse: but the end of my writing is not to prove Tithes due so much as to shew which is the way to help thē that fear the Lord to be able to give God his due, which must be by the power of a Law taking away Tithes, as now they are challenged, and payed rather to the Devil then to God, at the best to men upon a civil account, which is a snare to many a gracious soul.

There is a second Opinion that Tithes were payd among the Jews by a judicial Law. It seemeth to me somewhat absurd that Holy things and Worship should be referred to judicials. And besides they that have read Histories know, that this is an invention of the Popish Schoolemen: and though it be elder then the former Opinion, that Tithes were ceremonial; yet it is but at most four hundred years old, and was thought upon, to excuse the Romish sacriledge of appropriating parochial Tithes to the Popes kinsmen, Abbots and Monks, as D. *John Reynolds*,
upon

upon *Obadiah* notably sheweth. For after the Pope had through corruption made Tithes away from their proper charges, to salve it, this errour was devised, and this is the second Opinion.

The last and most likely to be true (for I determine not absolutely) is, that Tithes are the Lords, and belong to such as are employed about his worship morally, and that to maintaine Ministers is a part of the worship of God, for so *Jacob* did worship God, *Gen. 28.22.* and that such as withdraw themselves from this duty, by withdrawing maintenance from Ministers, are robbers of God, *Malachy 3.8.* and mockers of God, *Gal. 6.6,7.* And here I might make work, had I time and skill, and an inclination to make a Treatise of Tithes, to shew you the various Opinions that are now in *England* concerning Ministers, and their maintenance. Some scarce allowing any use of a Ministry, or Ordinances, others granting reasonable competent maintenance to be meet to be allowed, Others pleading hard for the continuance of Tithes as they are now payable

payable by Law and custome and to parish Ministers and Lay-proprietaries as they are called, or to Colledges, and so forth.

From all these I must crave leave to dissent, from the first sort, with detestation of their delusions and irreligioufness; from the second and third with a protestation, that I will yield when mine ensuing reasons are soundly answered, which keep me from closing with either opinion.

And here I shall as I am able, set down my present perswasion concerning paying of Tithes in these ensuing particulars.

I. That the present payment of Tithes is a grievance to this Common-wealth, a propagating of Antichristian sacriledge in regard of impropriations, an oppressing of Saints and ensnaring of the consciences of some that are unsatisfied touching their Parochial Ministers, and touching the thing it self *viz.* of paying Tithes, an hinderance to orderly members of gathered Churches in many places from doing their duty towards such as are their Officers orderly set over them, & a strengthening of Christs enemies prophane and scandalous and proud Mini-

B

sters

sters by giving or paying that to them which by God is appointed for such as are sent by him, and gifted and called according to rule.

2. That (with humble submission) it is the Magistrates duty to take away all these burdens and snares that lie on the states and consciences of the godly of the Land, and make them unable to discharge their moral duty in their proper Churches which is to communicate unto them that teach them in all good things, as the Lord hath ordained: compare *1 Cor.* 9. 14. with *Gal.* 6. 6.

3. That Church-members ought to be looked upon as a willing people, *Psal.* 110. 3. and to be severely dealt withall for neglect of duty herein, as in other disorderly walkings, and not otherwise.

I mentioned but now three sorts, and rejected the first as not worth the taking notice of, for why should I look on them that deny the use of a Gospel-Ministry and Church-Ordinances, seeing they are not so much as out-side Christians? The second sort that would have Ministers to have an honourable and comfortable maintenance allowed to them, and settled upon them by Parliameta-

ry power, do seeme to many to be far more commendable then the latter sort of, which I am to speak by and by; but for my part I cannot agree to this opinion, for these reasons. 1. Because it dispenseth with the performance of that which is (most probably at least) a Moral duty, to wit paying of tythes where they are due. 2. Because it supposeth that Christians ought not to chuse their owne Church-Officers, or there to joyne, and so to give tythes where they enjoy the benefit of labours from him or them to whom they pay their tythes. 3. It forceth out from people money whether they will or no, which is not suitable to a Gospel spirit. 4. It is not so honourable a way as to share and share like in all sorts of blessings that God shall be pleased to bestow upon his people.

But for the last opinion and cry for the continuance of tythes as now they are payable; I much wonder that it hears so well from so many that seeme so wise and godly. Let me not seeme to be one of those that would perswade people to rob God, for that is farre from my thoughts. Nor am I against Universities, Schooles, Towne Divines, or

B 2

Teachers

Teachers of the ignorant, but do wish that out of such lands and estates as have bene forfeited to the Common-wealth, some might be imployed for these pious uses, and also do humbly present this to be considered whether it may not be fit by rates and taxes, to enforce such as walk not with well-ordered Churches, to maintaine such as are set by the Magistrate about any of the forementioned imployments : Methinks there should be wisdom enough in this present Government to finde out fit wayes and courses for these things. But that which I aime at is, 1. That we may not (according to the Proverb) *Rob Peter to pay Paul*, as the Pope hath done by robbing Parish Churches to maintaine Abbies and Priories, &c. which hath bene high sacriledge, and the cause of much confusion in the Christian world. 2. That members of well-ordered gathered Churches be not compelled to pay tythes (which belong to their proper Ministers) unto such as either Patrons thrust upon them, or the prophane multitude get in by an over-ruling Vote, or even unto such as being godly Divines appointed by Authority to teach all
forts

ports, ought to be cared for some other way.
 Lastly, That only spiritual weapons be made
 use of to deale with Saints in matters that do
 purely belong to Religion, forasmuch as all
 do not see this truth of the *Jus Divinum* of
 tythes, and will be offended if they should be
 enforced by the Civil power to do that as a
 part of Divine worship, which they cannot
 see so to be,

CHAP. III.

*In this Chapter following Objections against this
 that hath beene said, are answered.*

BUT some may say that this taking away
 of tythes by a Law, will be very in-
 jurious to Ministers, who will be exposed
 to poverty and want, and what ju-
 stice can there be to inflict such pu-
 nishments upon those who never deserved
 it? To which I answer, that pious and true
 Ministers of Gods sending, have the Lord
 for their portion: and although they should
 have nothing, yet they do possesse all things,
2 Cor. 6. 10. and yet further, the Lord hath
 provided a liberal maintenance for them, as

I have shewed before; *He hath ordained, that they that preach the Gospel, should live of the Gospel*; Christ hath declared, *that the Labourer is worthy of his wages*, Luke 10. 7. And James the Apostle threatens them that keep back, &c. chap. 5. 4. and many arguments are used by Paul, 1 Cor. 9. 7, &c. to confirme this truth: but what's all this to continuing of tythes as they are now payable by Law, to Noblemen, Gentlemen, Colledges, Parish Priests, or any very unworthy men (who yet make the greatest cry) by this meanes godly people are disabled from, rather then holpen to do their duty to their godly Pastours and Teachers.

And further I answer, that Gods works are most beautiful when they are done in Gods way, and not according to the humorous superstitious brabbling, contentious, customary wayes of men; If paying of tythes be a Moral duty (as it is supposed to be, at least *secundario*) and it be confirmed to be in force (at least by consequence or equivalence) in the writings of the New Testament: Why should not Christians be left in this duty to Scripture rules and Church weapons

pons (*which are not carnal, but mighty, &c.*) as in other parts of worship? But it may be replied, that then people will break bonds, and cast away Christs cords, and make little account of word or censure, &c. Will they so? Why then let our Ministers that are for promiscuous administrations, see their error in that opinion, and the sinfulness of their practice, and learne hereafter to separate between the precious and the vile, and be more faithful in their trust, and then God will teach men to be more forward to pay them their due, and to allow them at least competencies, if they be not convinced of this truth of the Divine Right of paying of tythes, which I wish were more searched into, as all truths ought to be without partiality.

Object. But it will be an act of injustice to take away from men that which is their proper right by the ancient Lawes of men, and which men have bought and paid for, and to give it to such as have no right thereunto, whose it never was in any ones opinion (for indeed if tythes be not the Lords (as hath formerly beene shewed they are) they must needs

needs be theirs whom Law and possession hath settled them upon). Now to take tythes from them that claim them, & receive them as their right by Law (which determines propriety) without allowing a valuable consideration, may seeme to be great iniquity.

Sol. To which I answer, that if to withhold goods from the owner be a sin, and forbidden (as it is) in the Word of God: then it can be no sinne in the Magistrate to judge the restoring of them to the rightful owner, and to turne the streame into its proper channel. The case is the same touching tythes, whether you look upon them as due by the Moral Law to Ministers, or as devoted in the elder times of the Gospel-Church, though for my part I rather believe the former; but we will not make more questions then need to divide the worshippers of God. The scope of this Tract being to evince the duty of this present Power to take tythes away as now they are payable, and to put people into a capacity of doing their duty.

Object. But if the Lawes of men do not compel persons to do their duty, they will be remiss and negligent, &c.

Sol.

Sol. To which I answer, The Churches are to take cognifance of miscarriages in their proper and peculiar members, and they have not the power of the Keyes committed to them in vaine, it is not sword work, either Military or Civil, to force peoples consciences, but the work of the Spirits sword, as hath formerly beene hinted.

Quest. But what course then shall be taken to provide for such as are to instruct the world?

Ans. I answer, Churches may send out members, and the State (if they see it fit) may out of Gleebe-lands (so called) or other devoted Revenues, or by Taxes and Rates, allow such or any others whom they shall judge meet for that work of preaching (whether Church-officers or others) a convenient stipend or pay; provided that Church-members be not robbed of that which they are carrying to the Lord as his portion by his owne appointment and ordinance. There may be many wayes thought upon to furnish the Nation with able & godly Teachers and Preachers, either fixed or itinerary wch may be authorized and maintained in this excellent

lent needful imployment, if they be not Church-officers; and if they be Church-officers, then care is taken for them already by the Ordinance of God as hath beene shewed; and indeed such only are fit (unlesse in case of extreme necessity) for that work of publike preaching, and it will tend much to the making of peace among Professors of Religion, and it is very suitable to the ancient practice of the Church in the times after the Apostles. *Athanasius* against the Meſſalians, writeth, that there were diuerſe Bishops in ſome one Church, though not in that of *Alexandria*: And *D. Sutcliffe, de pont. lib. 1. chap. 5.* ſaith, that *Paul* towne by towne appointed Presbyters and Bishops. And *Epi-phanius, cont. haeres. lib. 2. haeres. 27.* And *Eusebius* also, in his Ecclesiastical story, reckons both *Peter* and *Paul* for Bishops at *Rome*, both at one time. But I lay not much weight on these things. Only to shew you that if in one particular Church there be diuers Ministers, Bishops, Presbyters, Elders (call them by which of these names you will) there may be a sparing of some of them by course to instruct the world, and yet they may be
ready

ready also to preserve good order in the particular Churches to whom they do belong, and to propagate the Ordination (for the perpetuity of Churches respectively) others to succeed them from time to time upon the election of the members of each Church of fit men so to be presented to them to receive Ordination. And as *Calvin, lib. 4. cap. 3. sect. 8, 15. & lib. 4. cap. 4. sect. 1.* affirmeth that from among the company of the Presbyters some were chosen to be Pastours and Teachers, and the rest were Overseers and Censurers of the behaviours of the people: so why may not these by course, or some of them be chosen to preach and teach abroad, and receive their livelihood from the Churches to whom they do belong, out of the tythes paid in to them by the members, and due unto them as Ministers of those Churches? For I would not have you think that one man should scrape hundreds together from the Church (as some Parsons so called now do) but that tythes should be brought into Gods store-house (as we read they were commanded to be, *Mal. 3. 1.*) and so employed to the service of God in maintaining Ministers

Ministers and Church-officers. But I am sensible of the running of my Pen. I therefore returne to the Answer to the Question, *viz.* that men of small reach may easily finde out wayes for instructing the world that do not submit to any Church. Bishops or Ministers of old had the care of both Cities in which they lived, and Countries adjoyning, and besides Church-members and others live promiscuously together in most places, & if they do not, care may be taken without so much ado for teaching and instructing all. Whole Cities or townes were not Churches in ancient time, neither ought they to be so now. We read of the Church of *Smyrna*, one of the seven Churches of *Asia*, where *Polycarpus* was Pastor, as soone as he was knowne to be a Christian, was martyred by the rage of the multitude, and that (as *Eusebius, Eccles. hist. lib. 4. cap. 15.* recordeth) in the sight of his owne people. The whole Cities there were not Churches; if they had been, how could the Church of *Smyrna* (writing to other Churches of the foresaid martyrdome) entitle her selfe the Church of God which is at *Smyrna*? And yet I will not deny but there might

might be some few here & there in the town and hamlets thereabout, which belonged to the Churches in the greater towns and cities, but not as now where *Tavistock* town is one thing, and *Tavistock* parish another, because it is supposed all that are within the precincts of the parish, must needs be members of the Church there, and so hath it beene accounted formerly: but I must confesse (without fear) it is otherwise now. And why may it not be so in other places? I teach all in the publike meeting-house, but do only baptize the children of such as are received and allowed members of the Church, and admitted to the Lords Table. And therefore (this question notwithstanding) I conceive, taking away of tythes, as now payable, will no way hinder the teaching of the world, but rather (as I have shewed) further it, when Church-members shall be enabled to pay their tythes to their proper Churches.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

*In this last Chapter you have the Conclusion with
humble submission to the Churches of Christ,
and to the Ministers of the Gospel.*

IT is not my purpose to be either peremptory or prolix. I will therefore summe up all. Whether they shall read these subitanous collections that hold that tythes are meer almes, which was the opinion of those who were called the Waldenses, which doubtless they were drawne to hold, upon the abuse of tythes which they saw under the Church of Rome; which opinion afterward came to be received and taken up by *John Wickliffe* and his scholars, as you shall finde it to be the 18 Article amongst those against him condemned in the Councel of *Constance*, and by *John Hus* a Bohemian, *William Thorp* an Englishman, as appeareth by their examinations recorded by Mr. *Fox*, which hath also since beene taught by Anabaptists and Trinitaries, as may be seene in a book *de antithesibus veri & falsi Christi*, Anno Domini 1568. *Alba Julia*, and is followed by many now that would have Ministers and Church-officers to have

have right to nothing: Or whether they shall peruse what I have written, that hold for a reasonable and competent maintenance as due by Divine authority, which is the opinion of them of the Church of *Rome*, as *Bellarmino* declareth, *Tom. 1 contr. 5. lib. 1.* and is much received among our Writers of the Reformed Churches, *cap. 25.* Or whether they look upon these lines, that hold tythes due by the expresse Word of God, which is the judgement of the ancient Fathers from the beginning without contradiction, untill the Supreme Authority of the Pope took them away by meanes of impropriations: This is the conclusion, that as now they are payed by the Lawes and usages of this Nation, they cannot be warranted to be well paid: which to prove, I provoke any Divine, Lawyer, or other to make good by sound arguments out of the Word of God; and therefore that they ought to be taken away notwithstanding all that hitherto I have heard to be alledged for the keeping of them on foot.

If tythes be due at all, it must be either by the Law of God or men, if of men, either by Princes constitutions, or by the Canon Law,

as I have said in *chap. 2.* They were paid before the Canon Law was invented, and better then since. And few plead Princes constitutiōs for their ancient payment in the Church, for they are held due in all the Christian world over, which no one Prince ruleth. And for our late paying of them by Lawes and Ordinances, if the Common Law were well applied, it would be found to be *Malus usus*, and therfore *abolendus*. Wherefore seeing all that can be said for continuance of tythes is declared to be of no force, seeing it is so injurious to the Churches, so oppressive to the people of the Land, so unwarrantable by the Word of God, the taking of them away so much desired by all that are the most considerable, & that this is the way to have them paid regularly by such as see that truth, & are so judged, or else to help them that are for a liberal maintenance, for Ministers to be able to do their duty according to their light : Seeing wayes may be easily found out for preventing all inconveniences that will come by their taking away, I conclude as *Cato* did his Orations, & *semper diruendam esse Carthaginem*. So, that by any means tythes as now payable

able of all sorts root and branch are by Authority to be taken away, in the judgement of T. L.



AN APPENDIX to the former discourse by way of Apology for the seasonableness of it, which some do or may suppose to be otherwise.

I Am very sensible (*Christian Reader*) that I shall be looked upon with diverse sorts of eyes, and the most (I have cause to think) will cast ill aspects upon these few lines I have written touching the Moral duty of giving the tenth of our estates to God, the Lord Paramount of all that we enjoy, as tenants at will, by, and under this (as it were) reserved rent. But forasmuch as I judge it to be, not only a duty as I am a Minister, to bear witness to every truth in due time and place, but especially to look after and eye Gods call to a work of the time, when it should be done more eminently and universally; and conceiving this to be such a one, I trust I shall not be mis-judged by all, nor the most of them that truly fear the Lord; if in any competent measure they stand loose & disengaged from

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private

private interests. For otherwise truly I shall be in danger of deep censure, & such of snares and flurs, to the drawing of them perhaps to oppose, yea, persecute this work of mine, though intended for the relief of tender consciences, and to make a beginning by breaking of the ice in this thing, which taske God hath bin pleased all along my life (as I could shew in many particulars) to lay upon me.

Interests are diverse, of honour some, some of profit, of friends other some, and ease and peaceable sleeping in a whole skin (as we say) will be very techy at such things as cause troubles and stirs, in places and countreys, as the effectual prosecuting of this truth by the hand of power in regard of the practick part is like enough to do. But interests are never so dangerous as when coloured over with pretences of piety, justice, Religion: As we read in *Samuel* of *Saul's* sparing of *Agag* and the best of the flock in order (as he pretended) to the worship and service of God, or in pity to that King: but this proved a cause of casheerment to *Saul* by God, and another must take his place. The *Gadarens* upon an interest of profit sent *Christ* away,
for

for they were loath to lose their pigs : And *Diotrephes* upon the interest of honour and preeminence opposeth *John* and the work of Christ in his Churches. Interest of friendship was a great blur and scourge to good King *Jehosaphat*, to wit, his joyning with *Ahab* and *Ahaziah*. I might tell you of the interest of relations, which was such a cause of folly in King *Solomon*, who by his wives upon this account was drawn to Idolatry. Also do we not see that many publike Preachers like the Pharisees, oppose Christ in many of his servants, because they are not made (as it were) little Gods, as once they were; thus many upon the interest of honour miscarry much, that promised better when time was. But yet truth at last will profligate all that stands in its way, and as it is written of the Governors of *Judah*, *Zach. 12. 6. Will be like a heath of fire among wood, and like a torch of fire in a sheaf, and devoure all that stands against it on the right hand and on the left.* But to the matter in hand. For the point of taking away tythes as now they are required, and many molested and grieved in spirit, some even precious ones, for being unwilling to pay

C 2

them

them as now made payable, and yet made by
 force so to do, I say for this I suppose I shall
 have many approvers of what I write among
 such as pretend to the exactest Reformation.
 But the other branch of my assertion will not
 so easily go down with them. Well, if it will
 not yet, I hope yet they will not be unchari-
 table of me that write what I judge to be true,
 and what I think more Saints will see to be
 a truth shortly. In the meane time however,
 I trust that all that have the face of Religion,
 will be loath under a Gospel dispensation
 shining as the Sun in its strength, to be worse
 and more backward to Minister to the Lord
 of their substance, then the Jewes were, who
 lived under such dark Typical and umbratic-
 al administrations. And in the meane time,
 I hold forth no other compulsories to be
 made use of, but such as are to work upon
 conscience, for these are the weapons Mini-
 sters and Churches must make use of; judg-
 ing such (for my part) as can finde in their
 heart to neglect expresse commands of Scri-
 pture concerning Ministers maintenance, and
 distributing to the necessities of the Saints,
 (yea of any that are in want) to be unmeet
 for

for communion in Church-Ordinances. And let such as will not hear the Church, know that the Lord is coming. Doubtlesse did Ministers and Saints wield and look upon spiritual weapons with faithful hands and awful eyes, there would more be done (in souls I meane borne of the spirit) incomparably, then by all the force of an arme of flesh can ever be expected.

But I am afraid many Ministers had rather serve the State for visible stipends, then Jesus Christ upon Scripture pay; which is one maine cause I am perswaded, though they shall surely answer for it that so use us) that we are so vile and contemptible among the people. But some objections are to be answered.

Obj. I. As first, that this Nation is incapable of this way and work, there being so many in it whose estates are upon the matter made up of tythes, &c. and therefore it is (at least) unseasonable, though possibly taking away of tythes, as now payable, may be effected in time to come.

Sol. To which I answer, that the Scripture gives us many examples of such as have

acted by halves about necessary works, upon reasons of State, and grounds of policy, who have alwayes found at last it had been better for them to have walked exactly, and to have done to the utmost, what God would have had them to do. A grave wise counsell was led into a very ill practice, to wit, to Vote the Son of God to death upon a reason of policy *John 11. 47. onward in divers verses.* And besides, we have had experience that some have let slip opportunities and nicks of time wherein they might have done great things, which they could never recover again. Now therefore while the spirits of the most of the godly in the Land are, and have beene upon this point of extirpation of this root of mischief which lieth in the way of advancing Gospel-reformation, paying of tythes I mean, as they are now required to be paid; it seems to me to be the duty of all, so farre as in them lieth, to promote this work before the door be fully shut, and God disowne the present actors for want of faith, courage, diligence, and sincerity. And although a sentence of death seem to be passed already upon Christs cause in this particular, yet we should not
flinch

finch or be discouraged, as long as there is any the least possibility of doing good. And lastly, the procrastinating of a work which God hath marked out to be now to be done, by the votes of his sealed ones in all places, is a very great offence: As in *Haggai's* time the work of building of the Temple was put off under pretence the time was not come, *Hag. 1. 2.* for which they are sharply re-proved.

Obj. 2. But it may further be objected, that the greatest, wisest, and most learned in the Land cry shame of such motions: and some that have been forward this way have now learned more wit, and are as much against it as ever they were for it, &c.

Sol. True it is, Gods works, though in their season, have seldome found the friendship of great ones. Truths of God (especially touching upon interests) are a continual offence to the great men of this world. *Have any of the Rulers or Pharisees believed in him?* was thought a good plea in Christs time, *Not many wise, not many mighty, not many noble,* in Pauls time. It is not long ago I taught out of this Scripture, *But their Nobles put not their*

their neck to the work of their God. I
 confesse this is a great discouragement to ma-
 ny. Men of princely race, noble blood, great
 parts, are not usually saved first. *The Lord shal*
save THE TENTS of Judah first, Zach. 12.
 7. And therefore I am not utterly cast down
 to see many great and learned ones with-
 drawing their hands from Gods work. But
 I humbly propound two things. First, whe-
 ther Moral precepts are out of date? I hope
 none think so, that resolve that Christ is Lord
 and King of his Church, and that Morals are
 of eternal verity. 'Tis true (I confesse) that
 neither this Law of Decimation or tythes,
 nor yet that of a Septimarian Sabbath are pri-
 marily Moral, but that they are secundarily
 and positively Moral I have formerly pro-
 ved for the one, and judge so of the other,
 though it be not my present work now to
 meddle with it. And I am perswaded many
 that dislike my way of handling this matter,
 are yet clear enough of the same judgement
 with me, *viz.* that tythes are the Lords por-
 tion, and due *Jure Divino*. Then secondly,
 I humbly demand, whether there can be
 greater evidence that this is a truth of God
 (about

(about removing what hindereth the practising of it, I meane) then have beene in our age : when the spirits of men are raised to obey Christ in all things, and *to follow the Lamb whither soever he goeth*. For although it be true, that much darknesse is among the godly party about the latter part of my Thesis, that tythes are holy to the Lord Morally; yet for the catching and snatching of them which is now in use, and the compelling of people to give (not to *Cesar* only; but) to Nobles, Lawyers, persecutors of the power of godliness, and I know to whom else, that which is Gods; I am perswaded it is generally condemned in the hearts and spirits of all, or the most that truly fear and love God.

And notwithstanding, what by the perfidious and treacherous dealing of some particular persons that have beene employed about great works in our dayes, who like *Abfolon* or *Achitophel* to *David*, or like *Sheraiab* to *Nehemiah*, or *Judas* to Christ, have proved false; and what by discouragements of the honest party, and disappointments of expectations in the losse of fair opportunities (which we in *England* are not strangers unto); And what by over-acting of others before
dispen-

dispensation to each particular gave the call; And what by conjunction with such as have not beene reall hearted to the cause of God; this truth and some others seeme to be flaine with the two witnesses for a time; yet I am perswaded it will not be long before God will returne to his work that hath beene of late upon the wheele; and either make some to remember themselves and do their first work, or lay them aside (that peoples eyes may be removed from instruments to himself) and casheere them that have casheered themselves out of their employments for God and his people; and of stones raise up children to *Abraham*, and bringers to passe of his minde and will, for the setting up of Christian worship, and throwing downe that carnal Ministry which is chiefly kept up by this irregular paying of tythes in this Nation, to such as Gods people can see no mark of, or call from God upon.

The result of all is clearly this, that if great men will not, meaner men shall. Christ was borne of meane parentage, came out of *Galilee*, which could not but be a cloud over him, and a great trial to the faith of the
godly

godly who were told that he was to come out of *Bethlehem*. It professed Ministers out of fear & distrust of God, will give an uncertain sound, tradesmen, fishermen, tentmakers, blew-apron-men shall speak plainer; I say, if these (with the Scribes & Pharisees) should be silent, or enemies rather, the stones shall cry out: The little stone hewed out of the mountain without hands, will throw down all that belongs to the fourth beast in either shape or forme. We were wont to say in the times of the Pelacy, that Homilies and the Service-Book were the two legges of a dumb Ministry in *England*. Consider I pray you, whether the compelling of payment of Tythes now as they are paid, be not of great use for the continuance of a formal artificial outside carnal Ministry in this Nation.

But methinks I hear some say, the Ordinance whereby Commissioners are appointed for the approbation of publik Preachers, together with that whereby diverse are appointed for the ejection of scandalous and insufficient Ministers, being duly and carefully executed, will quickly make a riddance of many that are now imployed, and so the last
discourse

discourse before-going will be uselesse.

I acknowledge there is very much in those two Ordinances, had we such spirited men as those actings call for which are in them required: And were that way the way of Christ so clearly to all, as perhaps it may be to some. But the declared dissents and discontentes of a very religious party, do seeme to say something is wanting. Besides raine to lay corne that should be cut downe, is out of season: And Barbers that cut off the haire and let the head alone, that should rather be so used, are insufficient to be executioners. Consider what I say.

There is further this one thing generally complained of (for I hear many things more then many that can do much more good then I can, if they would) that this tends very little in many places to the propagation of the Gospel, or saving of souls. For (as a great man in the Ministry said in publike, that he knew not which was the best death, poisoning or starving, so) say many, if such vacant places were filled with godly experienced Saints apt to teach, 'twere something; but ancient men are found scandalous, and so ejected,

ejected; and youths that will be any thing for
 a quiet life, are found to be made use of, or
 none at all: & to my knowledge, Patrons and
 young men can agree about Livings, and the
 Commissioners for Approbation never hear
 of either the Patron or his Clerk. Blessed be
 God that hath so farre put it into the heart of
 those that have power to prepare Christs way
 before him, as to do so much as hath beene
 done in this perverse, fioward, and unto-
 ward Nation: yet it is humbly conceived
 that notwithstanding the multiplied senten-
 ces of death upon Church work; yet grace
 and mercy that are by dark dispensations
 usually ushered in, are wrapped up and a-
 coming all this while. I wish none of my
 Brethren would give way to envious grudg-
 ings against the persons of such as are now in
 power, but rather pray for them, which I
 am sure, of they more stand in need of, then
 give cause of, envie. And for them my pray-
 er is, that they will cast downe that foule Idol
 Discretion falsely so called: My meaning is,
 that they would not be too much given to
 fears and forecastings, as *Jonah* was, where-
 by he was put out of Gods way.

To

To make an end of my *Appendix*. My hope is, that the time is not far off in which truths will be better seene and agreed upon by and among the Saints. As for fond Familists, Quakers, Ranters, and such kinde of poore seduced bewitched souls, let them be looked upon with pitie as we are Saints, and dealt withall by Magistrates, as Gods Word doth warrant. For my part I know no odds (now) betweene the power of our Governours, and the Kings of *Israel* and *Judah*. 'Tis true, their Kings were typical, and their Land Sacramental, but their power within Church and without, was the same that now it is, concerning both the Tables of the Morall Law. But I finde not that they that ruled well, did meddle with matters of Church cognisance purely so, otherwise then to protect the Priests and Levites and people of God, and punish evil-doers. Ye cannot be ignorant of the ground of that catching question moved to our Lord Jesus, *Is it lawful to give tribute to Caesar?* If it had not beene Gods, it had scarce beene worth the answering. If one should aske of me, *Is it lawful to pay Tythes to my Lord or Master such* a one

a one? I have learned of my Lord and Master to answer, *Give—— and unto God the things that are Gods.* If Magistrates will not, or cannot, though they would, redeeme or rescue the Lords portion out of the hands of the spoyler and sacrilegious Tenant, and make way for the Saints obervance of this Moral duty of giving God his due with more ease, and disburden their consciences that are vexed for not sinning against it (which yet may be their ignorance); I say if this cannot be, yet (for I acknowledge many clouds of darknesse are about this truth, which I hope the Sunne of righteousness will shortly dispel): yet deride not, slight not my counsel, let the Sabbath day, Ordinances (whereof this is one, and holding the same Covenant of grace in extent to you and yours (which was no ceremony among Gods ancient people) is another) and union together of Saints by profession in Churches, and of Churches also as streets of one *Jerusalem*, be carefully regarded; *And peace shall be upon you, and mercy walking by this Rule (or Canon) and upon the Israel of God.* Let God have his due in his way, though with some losse unto thee,

thee, untill the time come of the fall of Antichrist in this particular also, the exacting I meane of Tythes by titles derived from him and his sacrilegious adherents and successeurs. The Lord will shortly clear up this and other truths with the brightnesse of his coming. *Even so Amen, Come Lord Jesus, come quickly.*



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